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MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION

by

Lea Newman

March 2008

Thesis Advisor:	Rafael Biermann
Second Reader:	Mikhail Tsypkin

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13. ABSTRACT (maximum 200 words)

   On any given day, news sources are packed with information on the various negotiations going on throughout the world in an attempt to resolve an ongoing dispute. Typically, nation-states enter into negotiations as a final attempt to resolve their differences in a diplomatic forum rather than resorting to combative retaliation. These negotiations can be protracted and tenuous, especially when the disputing parties come from different cultures. This thesis asserts that all too often, culture is a neglected aspect of conflict resolution. Cultural mismatch and misunderstanding are additional confounding factors that complicate communication and create misperceptions that sometimes hinder finding a mutually acceptable compromise. This is especially true when an external third party, often from another cultural background, is added to mediate between the conflicting parties. When all parties approach negotiations with a clear understanding of the impact of cross-cultural understanding and communication on the conflict resolution process, the parties might find negotiations are smoother and resolution comes easier.

   This thesis attempts to merge two fields of study that, until now, have been left largely separate in the academic community and largely understudied: conflict resolution and cross-cultural communication. The overall question that this thesis seeks to address is: What is the role of culture in the conflict resolution process, specifically, in international negotiations? The thesis begins by laying out the conceptual foundation of both conflict resolution and culture/cross-cultural communication. We will then build on existing theory from conflict resolution and culture and attempt to merge and expand on them in order to draw up a model with indicators of cultural match / mismatch in international negotiation scenarios. Afterwards, we will apply this model to US-China relations, first assessing the amount of mismatch and then examining two cases, the 1999 bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade and the negotiations surrounding the EP3 incident in 2001. They confirm that indeed negotiations are greatly complicated by a large amount of cultural mismatch, even though further, more rigorous studies are warranted to refine the model.

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THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION

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Captain, United States Air Force
B.A., Hawaii Pacific University, 2001

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

On any given day, news sources are packed with information on the various negotiations going on throughout the world in an attempt to resolve an ongoing dispute. Typically, nation-states enter into negotiations as a final attempt to resolve their differences in a diplomatic forum rather than resorting to combative retaliation. These negotiations can be protracted and tenuous, especially when the disputing parties come from different cultures. This thesis asserts that all too often, culture is a neglected aspect of conflict resolution. Cultural mismatch and misunderstanding are additional confounding factors that complicate communication and create misperceptions that sometimes hinder finding a mutually acceptable compromise. This is especially true when an external third party, often from another cultural background, is added to mediate between the conflicting parties. When all parties approach negotiations with a clear understanding of the impact of cross-cultural understanding and communication on the conflict resolution process, the parties might find negotiations are smoother and resolution comes easier.

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I.   INTRODUCTION

A.   PURPOSE

Imagine a scenario if you will. As one of five representatives from the United States attending negotiations with Chinese businessmen, you are led into a conference room where the negotiations will take place. You see that there are a few seats empty in the center of their side of the table. You are directed to sit along the opposite side of the table and told that the leader of the Chinese delegation will arrive shortly. After almost an hour of waiting, your delegation grows impatient and is starting to show their frustration by continually checking their watch and sighing aloud. Finally the leader of the Chinese delegation arrives and suggests they share something to eat before beginning negotiations. Since the American delegation has already been waiting for close to an hour, they insist on beginning negotiations right away.

Although a benign example taken from the business world, this narrative gives examples of how both sides could have been more culturally sensitive to their counterparts thereby enabling a better start to negotiations. Punctuality is very important to Americans. Tardiness is perceived as rudeness and arrogance. On the other hand, sharing a meal is considered key to any negotiation as it gives delegation members on both sides a chance to get to know one another, thereby easing tensions before negotiations even begin. Declining the invitation could be perceived as the American delegation trying to take the upper hand and being unbending. In the end, this demonstration of cultural misunderstanding might inadvertently ruin negotiation attempts before they had even begun. We will revisit this example at the conclusion of the thesis to demonstrate how concepts and principles examined in the thesis would impact this scenario.

On any given day, news sources are packed with information on the various negotiations going on throughout the world in an attempt to resolve an ongoing dispute. Typically, nation-states enter into negotiations as a final attempt to resolve their differences in a diplomatic forum rather than resorting to combative retaliation. These

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negotiations can be protracted and tenuous, especially when the disputing parties come from different cultures. This thesis asserts that all too often, culture is a neglected aspect of conflict resolution. Cultural mismatch and misunderstanding are additional confounding factors that complicate communication and create misperceptions that sometimes hinder finding a mutually acceptable compromise. This is especially true when an external third party, often from another cultural background, is added to mediate between the conflicting parties. When all parties approach negotiations with a clear understanding of the impact of cross-cultural understanding and communication on the conflict resolution process, the parties might find negotiations are smoother and resolution comes easier.

This thesis will attempt to merge two fields of study that, until now, have been left largely separate in the academic community and largely understudied: conflict resolution and cross-cultural communication. The overall question that this thesis seeks to address is: What is the role of culture in the conflict resolution process, specifically, in international negotiations. It is a rather broad question that first of all aims at getting an overview as to the major effects of culture on conflict resolution, which is a prerequisite for further in-depth studies.

The thesis will begin with laying out the conceptual foundation of both conflict resolution and culture/cross-cultural communication. I will mainly concentrate on negotiations in international relations and also touch upon international mediation, as one major activity in the conflict resolution field. This discussion will start out with conceptualizing key terms and theories associated with both fields of study, which are then merged to come up with a model of how to test cultural match among negotiation partners. Once this conceptualization is accomplished, we will examine two cases that test my major hypothesis and the model. Lastly, this thesis will examine how a better understanding of culture and cross-cultural communication can positively enhance the conflict resolution process.

B.   IMPORTANCE

The basic assumption of this thesis is that the significance of culture in conflict resolution is still politically underrated and academically under-explored, with the effect that negotiations fail and opportunities for successful international mediation are missed. The concepts examined in this thesis have numerous applications throughout international relations. First and foremost, this thesis is an awareness-raising endeavor. It intends to raise awareness as to why it is so crucial to incorporate culture into the negotiation and mediation process. The findings of this thesis will contribute academically to the study of this topic that is expanding but still in its infancy. Scholars began to sense the importance of this topic in recent years and began to study what is often called "negotiation across cultures."[1]

Politically, I hope to draw conclusions on how parties can improve their negotiation strategies in any cross-cultural negotiation scenario. Representatives to international organizations could even apply the lessons learned from this study to the communications within their organizations, as these organizations (like the United Nations or the IAEA) themselves are comprised of nationals of different cultural backgrounds and may disagree on how to address the conflicts they are trying to resolve. As an example, cultural differences have proven to be a serious impediment in multinational peace support operations like UN "blue helmet" peacekeeping. Individual governments could also use the conclusions in this thesis as a means of improving their negotiation strategies when dealing with their counterparts in foreign governments. Representatives could apply them directly when acting as an individual mediator in an ongoing conflict. One might also consider that the findings of this thesis could be used, if applied early on in the conflict cycle, to avoid certain cross-cultural conflicts all together.

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[1] Raymond Cohen, *Negotiating Across Cultures; International Communication in an Independent World*, United States Institute of Peace Press, (Washington, D.C., 1997), 10-14.

C.   METHODOLOGY

The methodology to be used in this thesis will be deductive in nature. I will first build on existing theory from conflict resolution and culture, attempt to merge them and to expand on them to get to the theoretical foundation of my thesis, which conceptualizes inter-cultural communication in international negotiation scenarios. Once I have arrived at this concept, I will conduct a plausibility probe of my concept. Alexander George and Andrew Bennett define this as "a preliminary study on relatively untested theories and hypotheses to determine whether more intensive and laborious testing is warranted."[2] I will attempt to establish whether this concept and the preliminary hypotheses can be applied and hold up in a case study. At the end, I will interpret the results of this case study analysis to refine my concept. The conclusions will thus contain some theoretical findings, policy recommendations, and recommendations for future research. Overall, the aim is to come up with a modest building block for a future theory of inter-cultural communication in international negotiations.

To test my hypotheses, I have chosen revealing episodes in the negotiations between the United States and China; the 1999 Bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade and the 2001 EP-3 Incident. We will use the negotiations and public rhetoric of the U.S. and China surrounding these events to illustrate and test my hypotheses. For simplification purposes and easy demonstration of the ideas we have put forth, this thesis will focus only on the negotiations between the U.S. and China as they offer a most likely case of maximum cultural mismatch between the parties involved.[3]

My dependent variable is the negotiating behavior of the actors involved. The independent variables in this study are the cultures of the actors involved. Intervening variables include but are not limited to relationships and agreements with other actors or interested parties outside the dispute, global political and economic pressures and trends, and domestic politics of the actors involved.

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[2] Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences,* MIT Press (2005, Cambridge, MA), 74-76.

[3] Ibid.

II. CONFLICT RESOLUTION – NEGOTIATION AND MEDIATION

In a world of seemingly ever-increasing and never-ending international conflict, the ability to effectively resolve conflict is a critical skill the nations of the world must master in order to live in harmony with their neighbors and counterparts. Having learned many historical lessons on the effectiveness and benefits of non-violent conflict resolution, many nations are coming to the negotiating table early in order to avoid the mass casualties suffered in the past. Others, however, have not learned these lessons, or the issues they face are just too demanding to come to a negotiated settlement. Negotiations then easily reach a dead end. Mediation has proven to be an effective tool to enhance the chances of conflict management.

A. DEFINITIONS

In order to avoid confusion, let us begin by defining what we mean by the terms negotiation and mediation. Webster's dictionary defines negotiation in the following manner; "to confer with another so as to arrive at the settlement of some matter"[4] This rather simplistic view of negotiation is a good foundation that is quickly complicated when analyzing the intricacies of the actual interactions of the actors involved in negotiations. I. William Zartman asserts that negotiations occur when the disputing parties are "left to themselves to combine their conflicting points of view into a single decision."[5] Daniel Druckman builds upon Webster's definition of negotiation by describing it as communications between two or more nations that seek to come to an agreement of a dispute by negotiating either face-to-face or from a distance.[6] He adds that they may concern matters in a great variety of issue areas that may have local,

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[4] Merriam-Webster On-line Dictionary, *Negotiate,* http://www.m-w.com/dictionary/negotiate, (accessed 2 December 2007).

[5] I. William Zartman, "Negotiation as a Joint Decision-Making Process," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 21, no. 4, December 1977: 619-638.

[6] Daniel Druckman, "Negotiation in the International Context," *Peacemaking in International Conflict; Methods and Techniques,* I. William Zartman and J. Lewis Rasmussen eds., United States Institute of Peace, Washington, D.C., 1997: 81.

regional, or even global implications.[7] Fred Iklé defines negotiation as "an exchange of proposals ostensibly for the purpose of reaching an agreement."[8] These negotiations do not necessarily need to be the face-to-face meetings that we might normally think of. They can also occur in private caucuses "behind closed doors," via letters or telephone calls between the leaders of the parties involved (both official and unofficial), or even via public rhetoric exchanged in the media. Kolb and Babbitt note that "caucuses serve obvious instrumental purposes; they are a place to ventilate hostility, and are associated with enhanced problem-solving activity."[9] For the purposes of this thesis, we will take the term negotiation to mean discussions between two or more disputing parties in an attempt to resolve an unsettled dispute. Mediation, on the other hand, transforms the negotiation structure all together.

The major difference is that mediation introduces a third party into the conflict resolution process. The third-party intervention is political and aims to resolve or "referee" a dispute. Jacob Bercovitch defines mediation as a form of conflict management whereby disputants seek the assistance of or accept advice from "an outsider, a third party not directly a disputant," to settle their differences without resorting to violence or invoking the authority of law.[10] Saadia Touval and I. William Zartman define mediation as "an intervention acceptable to the adversaries, who cooperate diplomatically with the intervener." It "is not based on the direct use of fore and it is not aimed at helping one of the participants to win."[11] They go on to note that in essence mediators are part of a political process in which the mediator may recommend

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[7] Daniel Druckman, "Negotiation in the International Context," *Peacemaking in International Conflict; Methods and Techniques,* I. William Zartman and J. Lewis Rasmussen eds., United States Institute of Peace, (Washington, D.C., 1997), 81.

[8] Fred C. Iklé, *How Nations Negotiate,* Praeger, (New York, 1964), 43-58.

[9] Deborah M. Kolb and Eileen F. Babbitt, "Mediation Practice on the Home Front: Implications for Global Conflict Resolution," *Beyond Confrontation: Learning Conflict Resolution in the Post-Cold War Era*, John A. Vasquez, James Turner Johnson, Sanford Jaffe, and Linda Stamato eds., University of Michigan Press, (1996), 67.

[10] Jacob Bercovitch, "International Mediation," *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 28, no. 1, Special Issue on International Mediation (February 1991), 3-6.

[11] Saadia Touval and I. William Zartman, "Mediation in International Conflicts," *Mediation Research: The Process of Effectiveness of Third-Party Intervention,* Kenneth Kressel and Dean Pruitt eds., Jossey-Bass, (San Francisco, 1989) 115-137.

ideas for a compromise and assist the adversaries in bargaining to arrive at a mutually acceptable compromise; however, there is no requirement for the disputants to accept the mediators ideas.[12]

Third parties may be states, international organizations, NGOs or individuals. These third parties bring with them an additional set of cultural and organizational considerations. For the sake of simplicity, this thesis will focus on negotiations. However, note that the conclusions drawn from the study of international negotiations have direct application on international mediation attempts as well, and vice versa.

B.   THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS

Now that we have defined the terms negotiation and mediation, let us turn our attention to an examination of the negotiation process itself. Hopmann argues that "the key aspects of the negotiation process are characterized by bargaining in which 1) initial offers are made by each party to the other, 2) commitments are made to certain positions in an effort to hold firm, 3) promises of rewards and threats of sanctions are issued to induce other parties to make concessions, 4) concessions are made as one party moves closer to the other, 5) retractions of previous offers and concessions are issued as parties draw apart, and 6) finally, if the dynamics of concession making overcome the pressures to diverge, the parties tend to converge upon agreement somewhere between their opening offers."[13] He carefully adds that "even if agreement is reached, inequality of resources, of ability to exercise influence, and of bargaining skill may lead to asymmetrical outcomes, but in virtually all cases the outcome will constitute a compromise, falling somewhere between the opening positions of the parties."[14] Anatol Rapoport takes this process one step further by adding the importance of "developing

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[12] Saadia Touval and I. William Zartman, "Mediation in International Conflicts," *Mediation Research: The Process of Effectiveness of Third-Party Intervention,* Kenneth Kressel and Dean Pruitt eds., Jossey-Bass, (San Francisco, 1989) 115-137.

[13] Terrance P. Hopmann, "Bargaining and Problem Solving; Two Perspectives on International Negotiation," *Turbulent Peace; The Challenges of Managing International Conflict,* Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hamson, and Pamela Aall eds., United States Institute of Peace Press (Washington, D.C., 1996), 446.

[14] Ibid.

mutual understanding and seeking mutual gains that fundamental conflicts among different belief systems can be resolved peacefully."[15] Rapoport's contribution here will have more weight when we begin to look at cross-cultural negotiations later in this thesis.

C.   BARGAINING RANGE

Christer Jönsson argues that "parties initially ask for more than they expect to get. If we add the assumption that the parties know how far they are willing to go in terms of concessions we can, for each party, construct a continuum ranging from its maximum objective to its minimum acceptable outcome or 'resistance point'."[16] He calls this the contract zone or bargaining range. Jönsson admits that the difficult part is to identify the bargaining range accurately, which he describes as "a space where these continua overlap that is, where both parties prefer an agreement to breaking off negotiations."[17] He asserts that the "exchange of proposals" in the negotiation process "serves to gradually reveal whether a contract zone exists and if so, where it is located."[18] Jönsson also introduces the concept of BATNA (the Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement). From this perspective, "negotiators are supposed (and recommended) to determine their resistance points by comparing the value of an agreement at any stage of the negotiations with the value of no agreement; only if a negotiated solution is better than their BATNA will (or should) they agree."[19]

D.   TYPES OF NEGOTIATION

Having looked at the process of negotiations we can now conduct a more detailed study of the different types of negotiation. Daniel Druckman points out that while there are some theories that can be applied to negotiations in general; there are four main

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[15] Anatol Rapoport, *Fights, Games and Debates,* University of Michigan Press, (Ann Arbor, MI, 1974).

[16] Christer Jönsson, "Diplomacy, Bargaining and Negotiation," *The Handbook of International Relations,* Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse and Beth A. Simmonds eds., Sage Publications, (London, 2002), 224.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

perspectives in the study of negotiations that provide additional considerations: negotiations as puzzle solving, negotiations as a bargaining game, negotiations as organizational management, and negotiations as diplomatic politics.[20]

Druckman describes the puzzle solving method as a situation where the disputants "think about negotiation as a puzzle [or game] to be solved and prescribe 'solutions' based on the parties' preferences."[21] He argues that negotiators play the game of trying to anticipate the next move of the other player "before making a move or decision."[22] When speaking of this puzzle solving method, Christer Jönsson notes that many falsely assume that these negotiations are symmetrical in nature.[23] In his opinion, they fail to consider "power asymmetries" such as nuclear capability or economic superiority of one of the actors involved. In support of this concept, Hopmann adds that "parties with more attractive alternatives, and consequently with lower losses associated with the failure of negotiations, are more likely to be influential in claiming a larger share of the value being distributed within negotiations."[24]

Negotiation as a bargaining game is a situation "in which opponents exchange concessions" and "move gradually from their own initial positions toward the positions of others."[25] This falls in line with Jönsson's concept of BATNA and Jönsson's and Hoppman's thoughts of bargaining range that we have already discussed in this chapter.

With regard to negotiations as organizational management, Druckman writes that "organizational theorists view negotiation as a process of building consensus among

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[20] Daniel Druckman, "Negotiation in the International Context," *Peacemaking in International Conflict; Methods and Techniques,* I. William Zartman and J. Lewis Rasmussen eds., United States Institute of Peace, (Washington, D.C., 1997), 83.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Christer Jönsson, "Diplomacy, Bargaining and Negotiation," *The Handbook of International Relations,* Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse and Beth A. Simmonds eds., Sage Publications, (London, 2002), 219.

[24] Terrence P. Hopmann, "Two Paradigms of Negotiations: Bargaining and Problem Solving," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* (1995) vol. 542, 24-27.

[25] Daniel Druckman, "Negotiation in the International Context," *Peacemaking in International Conflict; Methods and Techniques,* I. William Zartman and J. Lewis Rasmussen eds., United States Institute of Peace, (Washington, D.C., 1997), 87.

diverse constituencies with stakes in the outcome."[26] This view of negotiation depicts it as a "two-tiered process" where actors must simultaneously play "the game" at the international negotiating table in an attempt to settle the dispute and on the domestic front in order to reconcile issues with its constituents and domestic political issues.[27] He comments that this view acknowledges the true complexity of the negotiation process as it "recognizes the negotiator's dilemma of being caught between the often conflicting expectations of his or her constituents at home and those of the negotiation's other parties."[28]

Lastly, negotiation as diplomatic politics "views negotiations as another setting for playing the game of international politics." This view takes a more "big picture" approach and is used by many "policy analysts and international relations scholars who are interested in how a particular negotiation fits into a broadly conceived foreign policy. The actors are governments whose actions are driven by policy prerogatives and structural elements of the international system."[29] For Druckman this view is unique in that the desired end state for a negotiation party might not be to resolve the issue at all, as parties are sometimes merely "seeking to bolster a relationship, obtain intelligence, or affect the actions of third parties, rather than seeking an agreement."[30] Iklé supports this notion of side effects of negotiations. He believes that actors might not always enter into negotiations as a means of coming to a resolution, but perhaps for the benefit of the side effects that come from merely entering into negotiations itself.[31] Some of these side effects include: keeping open lines of communication with a opponent that is preoccupied

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[26] Daniel Druckman, "Negotiation in the International Context," *Peacemaking in International Conflict; Methods and Techniques,* I. William Zartman and J. Lewis Rasmussen eds., United States Institute of Peace, (Washington, D.C., 1997), 88.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Fred C. Iklé, *How Nations Negotiate,* Praeger, (New York, 1964), 41-58.

by negotiations instead of resorting to violent action;, intelligence gathering about or deception of the opponent; propaganda to show good will in the eyes of the world community; and potential impact on third parties.[32]

E.   SUCCESSFUL MEDIATION

Over the last decade, Jacob Bercovitch has developed and refined a model that enlists the factors commonly associated with successful mediation (see Figure 1). Many of the variables also apply when analyzing negotiations. His intention was to illustrate the main variables determining mediation success by looking at various factors surrounding the context, process, and outcome of mediation.[33]
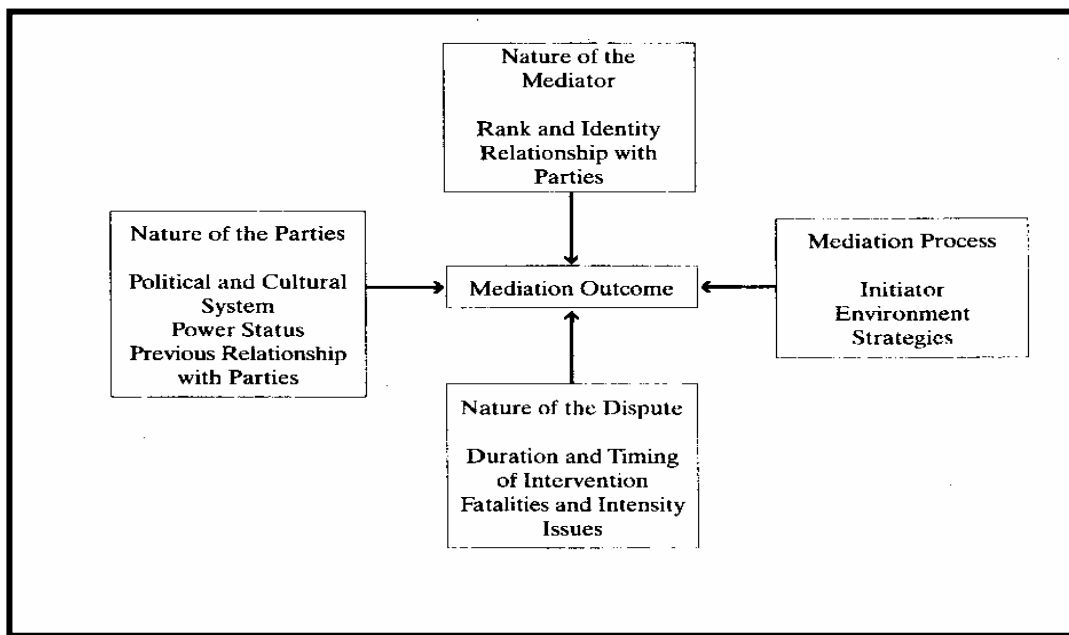
Figure 1.   Factors Associated with Successful Mediation[34]

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[32] Fred C. Iklé, *How Nations Negotiate,* Praeger, (New York, 1964), 41-58.

[33] Jacob Bercovitch and Allison Houston, "The Study of International Mediation: Theoretical Issues and Empirical Evidence," *Resolving International Conflict: The Theory and Practice of Mediation*, Jacob Bercovitch ed., Lynne Riener Publishers, Inc., (Boulder, CO, 1996), 14-20.

[34] Ibid., 11-35.

Bercovitch views the nature of the parties, the nature of the dispute, and the nature of a mediator and the characteristics of the mediation process itself as the key components to pay close attention to.[35] For our purpose, the nature of the parties and of the dispute is most relevant, Bercovitch cites the type of governmental system in place within each nation, the power of each of the opponents, and previous relations between the parties as the most important variables when analyzing the nature of the parties.[36] Although he doesn't directly refer to it, the democratic peace hypothesis that "democratic nations don't go to war with each other" is an excellent example of what Bercovich is talking about with reference to the governmental systems in place. David Moore also agrees that when the governmental system of each of the parties is similar the mediation process runs more smoothly.[37] He states that the leaders of democratic states, "because of the democratic norms they have learned throughout their lives, operate within similar philosophic references."[38] We will discuss this concept further later in this thesis when analyzing political culture. The power of each of the parties can refer to any perceived power disparity between the opponents; this includes tangibles like military capabilities, but also intangibles like leadership, training, will, etc, to actually wage war.[39] When examining the nature of the dispute, Bercovitch contends that duration and timing of the intervention, fatalities suffered and intensity of the conflict at the time of intervention, as well as the issues being disputed are the most important variables.[40]

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[35] Jacob Bercovitch and Allison Houston, "The Study of International Mediation: Theoretical Issues and Empirical Evidence," *Resolving International Conflict: The Theory and Practice of Mediation*, Jacob Bercovitch ed., Lynne Riener Publishers, Inc., (Boulder, CO, 1996), 11-35.

[36] Ibid., 20-25.

[37] David W. Moore, "Foreign policy and empirical democratic theory," *American Political Science Review*, (1974) vol. 68, 1192-97.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Jacob Bercovitch, "Mediation in the Most Resistant Cases," *Grasping the Nettle; Analyzing Cases of Intractable,* Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall eds., United States Institute of Peace Press, (Washington, D.C., (2005), 107-116.

[40] Jacob Bercovitch and Allison Houston, "The Study of International Mediation: Theoretical Issues and Empirical Evidence," *Resolving International Conflict: The Theory and Practice of Mediation*, Jacob Bercovitch ed., Lynne Riener Publishers, Inc., (Boulder, CO, 1996), 20-25.

More than Bercovitch, Gilady and Russet acknowledge the role of political culture as part of the conflict resolution process. They agree with Bercovitch's contention that power disparity and ability to wage war play a major role in reference to the nature of the parties. They also agree with Moore's the democratic peace thesis that "democratic nations don't go to war with each other."[41] They cite that "democratic government entails both cultural practices of non-violence and institutions to facilitate the peaceful settlement of conflicts of interest, in external relations as well as domestic politics."[42] We will explore the ideas regarding political culture of all of these scholars later in this chapter.

F.   WHERE DOES CULTURE COME INTO PLAY?

Bercovitch mentions culture when he considers the political and cultural system of the conflicting parties.[43] However, his model is quite limited when it comes to the analysis of the "nature of the dispute." Bercovitch makes only casual mention of cultural considerations in his model.[44] Many enduring conflicts are rooted in culturally engrained prejudices and biases against "the other." Bercovitch makes no specific mention of culture in his discussion of these variables other than acknowledging that parties of similar cultures have less conflict.[45] Overall, his theory does not adequately include cultural considerations. Moore, Gilady and Russett acknowledge the significance of political culture, but remain rather general in their treatment of culture in the conflict resolution process.

I argue that these approaches are all insufficient to grasp the impact of culture on international negotiation. They reflect a general tendency in the literature to neglect this variable in the mediation process. First, all the actors involved in a negotiation process

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[41] David W. Moore, "Foreign policy and empirical democratic theory," *American Political Science Review*, (1974) vol. 68, 1192-97.

[42] Lilach Gilady and Bruce Russett, "Peacemaking and Conflict Resolution," *Handbook of International Relations*, SAGE Publications Ltd., (2002), 392-397.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid.

bring their cultural background to the negotiation table. They are culture-bearing units – the disputing parties as well as the mediator. Thus, if a third-party mediator is engaged in the conduct of negotiations, his or her culture and negotiating style also has to be taken into account. But culture figures in even more prominently. Actually, it penetrates all the variables these scholars discuss. For example, the relationship between the parties is strongly influenced by the mutual images of their cultures, which stimulate affinity or distance, up to ethnic stereotyping. The previous relationship between the parties is also strongly determined by perceptions of cultural affinity. Thus, culture should be considered as a constant intervening variable in the conflict resolution process. However, as previously mentioned, in order to reduce complexity of the issues addressed within this thesis, I will be leaving out mediators and their cultures and concentrate on the conflicting parties and how culture shapes their negotiation behavior and the dispute history overall.

G.   FACTORS THAT HINDER SUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATIONS

While we have noted all of the factors that contribute to successful negotiations, let us also consider factors that may hinder or render negotiations unsuccessful. Marieke Kleiboer asserts that willingness to negotiate is a minimal requirement for a settlement or a resolution to come about.[46] Demonstrated hesitation to work toward a solution on the part of either actor can cause a complete breakdown of negotiations. In their book *War and Peace in International Rivalry*, Paul Diehl, Gary Goertz, and John Vasquez note that nations involved in enduring conflict are more likely to resort to violence and go to war. Furthermore, they note that once engaged in conflict, the longer the dispute, the more violent the battle becomes.[47] This is significant because lack of cultural awareness can draw out negotiation over a longer time period, thereby increasing chances of increased violence.

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[46] Marieke Kleiboer, "Ripeness of Conflict: A Fruitful Notion?," *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 31, no. 1, (1994), 110.

[47] Paul F. Diehl, Gary Goertz, and John Vasquez, *War and Peace in International Rivalry,* University of Michigan Press (Ann Arbor, 2000), 319.

H. THE NEGOTIATION "GAME"

The negotiation "game" is played out at several bargaining tables. Jönnsson asserts "that every bilateral international negotiation encompasses at least three bargaining processes: the external one between the two parties, and two internal ones within each of the parties."[48] Thus, negotiations can be "represented as one main game with a number of sub-games or 'auxiliary games' the playing of which influences the playing and outcome of the main game."[49] Using Jönsson's concept of negotiations, with the added insight of cultural considerations, it is easy to see the complexity of the negotiation and mediation process. Culture comes into play at both levels of the "game." At an individual level, each party is guided by cultural norms which shape their perception of the nature of the conflict (e.g., of the issues concerned and their rank ordering), of the nature of the other party (e.g., in terms of cultural affinity or hierarchy) and of the process of how to conduct negotiations. In order to achieve consensus on a course of action on the domestic level, each party has also to deal with internal controversy which may be stimulated by different cultural norms clashing before they can even approach the negotiating table for the "main game" with another party. Once they come to the negotiating table for the "main game," each party may once again be faced with a foreign culture who's norms are unfamiliar thereby causing strains in negotiation attempts. These levels might be decomposed for analytical purposes, but we have to keep in mind that the levels constantly interact as the negotiation process evolves.

Overall, conflict resolution research has mostly ignored cultural perspectives of individual nations involved in a conflict as a factor to consider during negotiations. We will now turn our attention toward an examination of culture, based on what is written so far on civil, political and strategic culture.

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[48] Christer Jönsson, "Diplomacy, Bargaining and Negotiation," *The Handbook of International Relations,* Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse and Beth A. Simmons eds., Sage Publications, (London, 2002), 226.

[49] Ibid.

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III. CIVIC, POLITICAL, AND STRATEGIC CULTURE

In order to understand the role of culture in the negotiation process, we must first understand what the term "culture" really means. Existing cultural theories divide the concept of "culture" into organizational, political, strategic, and global. If we conduct a search of the word "culture" in academic databases, we also find this term grouped into three distinct areas. These areas are grouped much like the Russian Matryoshka dolls where one small doll fits inside the next larger and so on. The smallest doll, civic culture, fits neatly inside of political culture, which is entirely consumed by the largest doll, strategic culture. Let us begin by examining existing cultural theories.

A. DOES CULTURE MATTER?

Bercovitch and Elgström explain that proponents of culture in conflict management base their perspective "on communication theory and on general works on the nature and influence of national culture."[50] They explain that advocates of cultural theories believe that culture impacts negotiations and mediation in order to explain "the logical chains between culture and behavior."[51] They make specific mention that "most common is the assertion that cultural dissonance leads to misperceptions that may result in negotiation failure."[52] They are also careful to note that "culture can also influence negotiations regardless of misunderstandings: it affects the positions as well as the strategies of the conflict parties."[53]

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[50] Jacob Bercovitch and Ole Elgström, "Culture and International Mediation: Exploring Theoretical and Empirical Linkages," *International Negotiation,* 2001, vol. 6, 3–23.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Ibid.

Faure and Sjöstedt expound on Bercovich and Elgström's discussion of cultural theory by explaining that "culture may determine the whole outlook on negotiations."[54] They note that "cultural background conditions how the actor perceives issues, other actors, and their intentions.[55]

Stephen Weiss also places importance on the impact of cultural perceptions on the negotiation process. He lists "the actors' basic conception of negotiation, their orientation toward time, their willingness to take risks, their protocol, and their decision-making style" as the distinctive cultural characteristics that affect negotiations.[56] Glen Fisher argues that conflicting beliefs, morals and methods of communication, all rooted in culture, influence negotiations in various ways.[57] Some of these include; shaping the individual's perception of the situation, assigning meaning onto the other party's actions, and leading the individual to inaccurately interpret the motivations of the other.[58]

On the other hand, some theorists are unimpressed with the argument that culture of any sort plays a crucial role in conflict management. In their discussion of the arguments against the impact of culture as an aspect of conflict resolution, Berchovitch and Elgström note that detractors of cultural theories typically argue one of four main points. Some site "national interests are the main determinants of international negotiations."[59] Others stress "the impact of power" as the key factor that supersedes all others.[60] They go on to explain that these skeptics also tend to view conflict management and mediation as "a universal process" and that culture merely influences the manner in

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[54] Guy Olivier Faure and Gunnar Sjöstedt, "Culture and Negotiation: An introduction," *Culture and Negotiation*, Guy Olivier Faure and J.Z. Rubin, eds., SAGE Publications, (Newbury Park, CA, 1993), 9.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Stephen Weiss, "Negotiating with Romans, Part I," *Sloane Management Review,* 1994, Issue 35, vol. 2, 51– 61.

[57] Glen Fisher, *International Negotiation: A Cross-Cultural Perspective*, Intercultural Press, (Yarmouth, ME, 1980).

[58] Ibid.

[59] Jacob Bercovitch and Ole Elgström, "Culture and International Mediation: Exploring Theoretical and Empirical Linkages," *International Negotiation,* 2001, vol. 6, 3–23.

[60] Ibid.

which that process is executed.[61] Lastly, critics of cultural theories typically believe in the concept of "a universal diplomatic culture."[62] They believe that it is this common diplomatic culture that in turn minimizes the influence of individual national cultures.[63] Since all of these diplomats understand the common "universal diplomatic culture," "culturally based misunderstandings play little role in conflict management."[64]

Michael Desch is highly critical of culture as a key to conflict management. The basic difficulty of even defining the term 'culture' makes it a difficult concept to operationalize. He goes on to say that "definitions such as 'collectively held ideas, beliefs, and norms that cultural theorists commonly use are so broad and imprecise that they have proven difficult to operationalize."[65] Desch also argues that cultural theories fall short because they tend to analyze single cases as opposed to looking at trends over a number of representative conflicts. Lastly, Desch argues "culturalism is a research program rather than a concrete theory."[66]

These arguments are valid, yet not fully convincing. Culture is a crucial part of the conflict management process. Misunderstandings between negotiating parties rooted in cultural awareness and understanding indeed often create breakdowns in communication that contribute to negotiation failure. Culture plays a role in the negotiation process from the start when the parties approach the negotiation table with culturally based morals and values that frame their perception of the problem itself and their counterpart. Culture continues to play a role in the negotiation process as the individual negotiators go through the negotiating proceedings as culture shapes the way they interact with the other party, their decision making process and their perception of the progress being made. Culture also preconditions the outcome of the negotiation

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[61] Jacob Bercovitch and Ole Elgström, "Culture and International Mediation: Exploring Theoretical and Empirical Linkages," *International Negotiation,* 2001, vol. 6, 3–23.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Michael C. Desch, "Culture Clash: Assessing the Importance of Ideas in Security Studies," *International Security*, vol. 23, no. 1, (Summer 1998), 141-170.

[66] Ibid.

process as it shapes what compromises may or may not be made, how the outcome will be implemented, and how it will be presented in its final form. With this understanding of existing cultural theories, let us now turn to the different dimensions of culture we find in academia.

B.   DIMENSIONS OF CULTURE

As already mentioned, cultural theories typically fall into one of four categories: organizational, political, strategic, and global.[67] Jeffrey Legro expounds on the idea of organizational culture by arguing that a nation's preference to participate, or not, in international cooperation is primarily derived from that nation's "domestic social and bureaucratic influence, namely organizational culture, not the balance of power."[68] If this approach is correct, then the nation's military establishment and its organizational culture also shape its diplomacy. Furthermore, Elizabeth Kier makes an argument for difference in a nations approach to conflict resolution based on its own domestic political culture. She notes that military doctrine is formulated primarily by civilian policy makers. Therefore, if a nation is, as a whole, more conservative, then that attitude will also be reflected in its foreign policy.[69] Similarly, Peter Katzenstein believes in the notion of the "cultural-institutional context of policy" as a determinant of national security policy.[70] Lastly, Martha Finnemore argues that global cultural trends are the driving factors that shape international cooperation.[71] She believes that as states increasingly participate and socialize in international organizations, which act thus as forums diffusing cultural

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[67] Michael C. Desch, "Culture Clash: Assessing the Importance of Ideas in Security Studies," *International Security*, vol. 23, no. 1, (Summer 1998), 141-170.

[68] Jeffrey W. Legro, "Culture and Preferences in the International Cooperation Two-Step," *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 90, no. 1, (March 1996), 119.

[69] Elizabeth Kier, "Culture and Military Doctrine: France between the Wars," *International Security*, vol. 19, no. 4, (Spring 1995), 66-67.

[70] Peter J. Katzenstein, *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics,* Peter J. Katzenstein ed., New York, (Columbia University Press, 1996), 4.

[71] Michael N. Barnett and Martha Finnemore, "The Politics, Power, and Pathologies of International Organizations," *International Organization*, vol. 53, no. 4, (Autumn 1999), 700.

norms, states conform to more globally acceptable courses of action.[72] Thus, an individual nations' diplomacy is shaped by the ebbs and flows of international pressures stemming from their participation in various international organizations. Let us now examine another perspective. This viewpoint breaks culture into various levels, starting with the common theme at all levels and the smallest of our cultural Matryoshka doll analogy, civic culture.

C.   CIVIC CULTURE

For the purposes of this thesis we will equate the commonly used term "culture" with civic culture. Anyone who has traveled abroad has experienced the phenomenon known as "culture shock." This is the experience of being confronted with customs and attitudes different from your own. Harry Eckstein argues that, "Culture is the distinctive, variable set of ways in which societies normatively regulate social behavior."[73]

Many sociologists and anthropologists have attempted to define the concept of culture. Most of these definitions start from a set of common customs, norms, and manners. For example, Raymond Cohen defines culture as the "remarkable variety of customs, manners, and forms of social organization developed by the human race in the conduct of its everyday affairs."[74] Cohen's definition also includes belief systems and artifacts as part of culture. He notes that culture is "an expression of the cumulative values of a particular community, as well as their traditional societal interactions and artifacts, and a means of interaction with others."[75] E.B. Taylor defines culture as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."[76] Johnston is careful to

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[72] Michael N. Barnett and Martha Finnemore, "The Politics, Power, and Pathologies of International Organizations," *International Organization*, vol. 53, no. 4, (Autumn 1999), 700.

[73] Harry Eckstein, "A Culturalist Theory of Political Change," *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 82, no. 3, (September 1988), 803.

[74] Raymond Cohen, *Negotiating Across Cultures; International Communication in an Independent World,* United States Institute of Peace Press, (Washington, D.C., 1997), 10-12.

[75] Ibid.

[76] E.B. Taylor, *Primitive Culture V1: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art and Custom*, Kessinger Publishing, LLC (9 July 2006), 1.

add that in the case where a particular society is comprised of more than one sub-culture, "there is a generally dominant culture."[77] That is to say that the society mainly takes on characteristics of the dominant culture.

These descriptions of the various components of civic culture are by no means exhaustive as I believe culture is more of a concept than a tangible, definable entity. For the purposes of this thesis, we will consider the following conglomeration of all of the above definitions as our definition of civic culture. Civic culture is the distinctive, variable set of ways in which societies regulate social behavior through a remarkably complex variety of customs, manners, and forms of social organization to include knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, artifacts and habits acquired by man as a member of a particular group. Let us now build around the civic culture Matryoshka doll to reveal more about the next doll we are now able to construct, political culture.

D. POLITICAL CULTURE

The concept of culture permeates every aspect of a society, including its domestic and international political spheres. Political scientists have weighed in on the concept of political culture. That implies that due to cultural aspects of a particular society a given political entity or government will act in a certain way. Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba defined political culture as "consisting of cognitive, affective and evaluative orientations to political phenomena distributed in national populations or in subgroups."[78] They elaborate on this idea by stating that "a political culture orients a people toward a polity and its processes, providing it with a system of beliefs (a cognitive map), a way of evaluating its operations, and a set of expressive symbols."[79] Components of a nations' political culture are "the sense of national identity, attitudes toward oneself as participant,

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[77] Alastair I. Johnston, "Thinking about Strategic Culture," *International Security*, vol. 19, no. 4, (Spring 1995), 45.

[78] Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture: Revisited*, Sage Publications Inc., (Newbury Park, CA, 1989), 26-27.

[79] Ibid.

attitudes toward one's fellow citizens, attitudes and expectations regarding governmental output and performance, and knowledge about and attitudes toward the political processes of decision making."[80]

Some scholars acknowledge the role of civic culture in political culture. Lucien Pye writes that "the tactics and strategies people employ in politics are essentially the playing out of the defense mechanisms basic to the personalities of the individuals involved."[81] That is to say that the perceptions and attitudes within their civic culture are manifested in the political actions of the individual actors involved. Pye adds, "Who is the enemy? Who is a friend? When to attack? When to retreat? What are the relationship of ends and means? Such questions, and a host of similar ones, make up the basic operational code of any political actor, and how they are answered is always a function of personality." [82] Alastair Johnston adds that "multiple cultures can exist within one social entity (community, organization, state, etc.), but there is a generally dominant culture."[83] This is the culture that manifests itself in a nation's political culture.[84]

As we have already discovered in the negotiation and mediation portion of this thesis, many scholars refer only to political culture as playing a role in conflict resolution. Specifically, they agree with the democratic peace argument that "democratic nations don't go to war with each other" due to a common set of "cultural practices of non-violence and institutions to facilitate the peaceful settlement of conflicts" [85] Joffe believes that democracies tend "to view the world as an extension of their domestic polities."[86]

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[80] Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture: Revisited*, Sage Publications Inc., (Newbury Park, CA, 1989) 26-27.

[81] Lucian Pye, "Political Culture Revisited," *Political Psychology*, vol. 12, no. 3, (September 1991), 501.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Alastair I. Johnston, "Thinking about Strategic Culture," *International Security*, vol. 19, no. 4, (Spring 1995), 45.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Lilach Gilady and Bruce Russett, "Peacemaking and Conflict Resolution," *Handbook of International Relations*, SAGE Publications Ltd., (2002), 392-397.

[86] Josef Joffe, "Tocqueville revisited: Are good democracies bad players in the game of nations?," *The New Democracies: Global change and U.S. Policy*, Brad Roberts ed., MIT Press, (Cambridge, MA, 1990), 125.

Raymond expounds on this by saying that "the procedural norms that govern conflict resolution in daily life are externalized. What functions at home is assumed to be viable abroad."[87] If we refer back to the brief example at the beginning of this thesis, it is easy to see how an actors civic culture directly impacts the interactions of that nations political culture as well. The Chinese civic culture says that asking the other to wait and sharing a meal before negotiations is acceptable while American civic culture stresses "business before pleasure" and punctuality. With our political culture Matryoshka doll fully in tact, we can now begin to piece together the largest of our cultural Matryoshka dolls, strategic culture.

E.   STRATEGIC CULTURE

There are many definitions of strategic culture floating around in academia. Daryl Howlett defines the concept of strategic culture by stating that "strategic culture is a product of a range of circumstances such as geography, history and narratives that shape collective identity, but one which also allows it a role in both enabling and constraining decisions about security."[88] Snyder looks at strategic culture a little differently. He defines strategic culture as "a set of semi-permanent elite beliefs, attitudes, and behavior patterns socialized into a distinctive mode of thought."[89] Rosen takes yet another approach by describing strategic culture as "beliefs and assumptions that frame...choices about international military behavior, particularly those concerning decisions to go to war, preferences for offensive, expansionist or defensive modes of warfare, and levels of wartime casualties that would be acceptable."[90] Lastly, Johnston writes that strategic culture consists of "shared assumptions and decision rules that impose a degree of order on individual and group conceptions of their relationship to their social, organizational or

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[87] Gregory A. Raymond, "Democracies, Disputes, and Third-Party Intermediaries," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 38, no. 1, (March 1994), 27.

[88] Darryl Howlett, *The Future of Strategic Culture*, 31 October 2006, 3.

[89] Jack L. Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Nuclear Options,* RAND, (Santa Monica, CA, 1977), 8.

[90] Stephen P. Rosen, *Societies and Military Power: India and Its Armies*, Cornell University Press, (Ithaca, NY, 1996), 12.

political environment."[91] These definitions of strategic culture demonstrate that this concept is "all encompassing" in that it combines the notions of civic and political culture and puts them in a framework of how nations conduct decision making based on their cultural background.

Alastair Johnston aptly illustrates the concept of strategic culture with an analogy taken from the U.S.-Soviet Cold War relations. He writes "the former Soviet military was said to exhibit a preference for preemptive, offensive uses of force that was deeply rooted in Russia's history of external expansionism and internal autocracy."[92] He goes on to explain that "the United States, on the other hand, tended to exhibit a tendency towards a sporadic, messianic and crusading use of force that was deeply rooted in the moralism of the early republic and in a fundamental belief that warfare was an aberration in human relations."[93] These "characterizations of the superpowers' strategic predispositions" are exactly what we are talking about when we refer to a nation's strategic culture.[94]

Howlett very concisely describes how strategic culture plays out on the international stage when he asserts,

> three distinct areas where strategic culture can contribute to policymaking are: in the analysis of threats; in considering the cultural context where conflict is underway; and in negotiations aimed at inducing peaceful relations. Each of these areas will have a range of complex factors associated with it but there is likely to be an underlying strategic cultural dimension that also should be incorporated. In the analysis of threats, for example, strategic culture can supplement traditional approaches by allowing the potential for anticipating, although not necessarily predicting, changes in the security environment. Such threats may be global in context but act locally in culturally derived ways. A strategic cultural analysis can therefore assist in considering how to respond to developments like these by exploring different pathways by which this type of threat emerges and devise a range of intervention strategies to suit the particular circumstance. Analyses of this kind may require considerable knowledge of any given

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[91] Alastair I. Johnston, "Thinking about Strategic Culture," *International Security*, vol. 19, no. 4, (Spring 1995), 45.

[92] Ibid., 32.

[93] Ibid.

[94] Ibid.

actor and it will not be an exact science, but it can contribute to a long-term understanding of the factors that shape strategic culture identities in a globalizing world.[95]

F.   THE CULTURAL MATRYOSHKA DOLL

Our cultural Matryoshka doll is now fully constructed. We can clearly see how civic culture neatly fits into political culture, which further easily nestles itself into strategic culture. Just like our cultural Matryoshka doll, analyses of culture at any of these individual levels, just as the individual dolls themselves, would be empty. Civic culture is the core. It is from the core of civic culture that the individual political actors get their set of customs, manners, and forms of social organization on how to conduct themselves in their day to day relations with others. All of their knowledge, beliefs, morals, customs, habits, and adherence to laws play into their interactions both domestically with other politicians, as well as internationally when representing their nation on the world stage, especially at the negotiating table. It is here that the political culture of the nation, an expression of civic culture in the political realm, feeds into that nation's strategic culture in determining how it will perceive and interact with other nations in security affairs.

Our analysis of civic culture, political culture, and strategic culture has given us a clear understanding of these levels and how they interrelate. We have also examined negotiation and mediation in an attempt to understand the conflict resolution process. Let us now turn our attention toward merging these two fields by looking at cross-cultural negotiation.

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[95] Darryl Howlett, *The Future of Strategic Culture*, 31 October 2006, 3.

IV. CROSS-CULTURAL NEGOTIATION

A. CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

A significant amount of literature covers the exploration of culture and cross-cultural communication. As we have seen in the previous portion of this chapter, throughout the literature on culture, we find that many sociologists and anthropologists have attempted to define the concept of culture. One thing they all agree on is that this is a difficult concept to define concisely. To review, for the purposes of thesis, we have defined culture as the distinctive, variable set of ways in which societies regulate social behavior through a remarkably complex variety of customs, manners, and forms of social organization, to include knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, artifacts and habits acquired by man as a member of a particular group. Now let us take this concept of culture and examine how it affects communication between cultures.

Typically cultural research includes in-depth studies of a specific culture, its components and how that particular society interacts with others. A trip to the travel section of your local bookstore will give you basic studies done on just about every culture on earth! For more in-depth cultural analysis, however, you'll have to head to the sociology or anthropology sections of a library. These works include detailed descriptions of each culture but also include analyses of how those cultures function on a day-to-day basis. Researchers are beginning to expand that research to include communication with other cultures as an aspect of cultural research. However, to date, most of this type of research has been applied to the mediation and negotiation processes in business. Scholars are only beginning to delve into culture as a factor of the mediation and negotiation processes in diplomatic interaction.

John L. Graham wrote that "communication theory suggests that when two people are effectively sharing ideas, their communication behaviors – both verbal and nonverbal

– will be rhythmically coordinated."[96] His research analyzed the verbal interactions as well as nonverbal communication such as the number of silent periods in a typical business negotiation, conversational overlaps, facial gazing, and touching during the conduct of Japanese, American, and Brazilian business negotiating practices. From these observations, Graham concluded that "substantial differences in bargaining style exist across cultures."[97] For example, he found that Americans use aggressive persuasion tactics.[98] Japanese negotiators were more likely to ask for higher profit margins while American negotiators were more likely to offer "fair price." Furthermore, he notes that in the business world, "cultural differences in bargaining processes… are potential sources for friction and misunderstandings between bargainers and increased transaction costs for international commercial relationships."[99] Since these cultural differences have been noted to have a serious impact on business negotiations, one can infer the profound impact of these same types of discrepancies on international mediation proceedings.

If we step outside the business world for a moment, we will find that several authors address the fundamental differences in perception of a given situation as being the root of disputes and possible disconnect when conducting communications with those from another culture. Richard Nisbett explains that the disparity between the perceptions of the two cultures has a profound effect on the actions of actors from each of these cultures in modern society.[100] He notes that East Asian thought is more "holistic" while Westerners rely more on rules and logic to guide their actions.

Raymond Cohen writes that this difference of perception directly affects how nations approach negotiations with nations from one of two distinct styles. "Low context" nations, he writes, such as the United States and Europeans, have a highly "verbal and

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[96] John L. Graham, "The Influence of Culture on the Process of Business Negotiations: An Exploratory Study," *Journal of International Business Studies*, vol. 16, no. 1, (Spring 1985), 90.

[97] Ibid.

[98] Ibid.

[99] Ibid.

[100] Richard E. Nisbett, *The Geography of Thought: How Asians and Westerners Think Differently… and Why*, New York, NY, The Free Press, 2003, 6-10.

explicit style typical of individualistic societies."[101] Jennifer Beer goes into further detail on the attributes of a low context cultures. She writes that they are typically:

- "Rule oriented, people play by external rules

- More knowledge is codified, public, external, and accessible.

- Sequencing, separation--of time, of space, of activities, of relationships

- More interpersonal connections of shorter duration

- Knowledge is more often transferable

- Task-centered. Decisions and activities focus around what needs to be done, division of responsibilities."[102]

Cohen explains that Asian nations, such as China, are considered to be "high context" nations, and therefore prefer "a style associated with nonverbal and implicit communication."[103] Beer explains that high context cultures are typically:

- "Less verbally explicit communication, less written/formal information

- More internalized understandings of what is communicated

- Multiple cross-cutting ties and intersections with others

- Long term relationships

- Strong boundaries- who is accepted as belonging vs who is considered an "outsider"

- Knowledge is situational, relational

- Decisions and activities focus around personal face-to-face relationships, often around a central person who has authority."[104]

Beer goes on to depict the impact of these different communication styles by explaining the difficulties one might face when entering into the realm of the other. She

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[101] Raymond Cohen, *Negotiating across Culture: International Communication in an Interdependent World,* United States Institute of Peace, Washington, D.C., 1991, 216.

[102] Jennifer Beer, "High and Low Context Definitions," *Communicating across Cultures*, 2003, http://www.culture-at-work.com/highlow.html#Definitions (accessed 13 March 2008).

[103] Cohen, Raymond, *Negotiating Across Culture: International Communication in an Interdependent World,* United States Institute of Peace, Washington, D.C., 1991, 216.

[104] Jennifer Beer, "High and Low Context Definitions," *Communicating across Cultures*, 2003, http://www.culture-at-work.com/highlow.html#Definitions (accessed 13 March 2008).

writes "high contexts can be difficult to enter if you are an outsider."[105] She attributes this to the fact that an actor entering into the realm of high context doesn't "carry the context information internally" and "can't instantly create close relationships."[106] On the other hand, Beer explains that "low contexts are relatively easy to enter if you are an outsider."[107] She attributes this to the following factors: "because the environment contains much of the information you need to participate, because you can form relationships fairly soon, and because the important thing is accomplishing a task rather than feeling your way into a relationship."[108] Again, we see distinct differences in basic communication style, let alone negotiation style.

Lastly, Robert Jervis describes how culture gets drawn into the decision making process by individual representatives of a nation at the mediation table. He explains that in order for good decisions to be made at the negotiating table, it is crucial for the individual representative to "predict how others will behave."[109] In this situation, in order to influence their behavior, he must "estimate how they will react to the alternative policies he can adopt."[110] Jervis contends that "even if his actions do not affect theirs, he needs to know how they will act in order to tailor his actions accordingly."[111] Therefore, Jervis contends that if the individual representative does not feel they have adequate information about the other state's "general attributes" (i.e., "developed or underdeveloped, democratic or dictatorial, stable or unstable"), the individual negotiator must then utilize other deductive reasoning " to ask himself what constellation of forces,

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[105] Jennifer Beer, "High and Low Context Definitions," *Communicating across Cultures*, 2003, http://www.culture-at-work.com/highlow.html#Definitions (accessed 13 March 2008).

[106] Ibid.

[107] Ibid.

[108] Ibid.

[109] Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics,* Princeton University Press, (Princeton, NY, 1979), 32.

[110] Ibid.

[111] Ibid.

beliefs, and goals could explain the state's behavior. He will then use the results of this analysis, together with estimates of the external stimuli the state is likely to face, to predict how it will behave in the future."[112]

Jervis' description makes multiple references to the need to deduce or predict actions of the other based on existing beliefs held by the negotiator. From our studies thus far, we now recognize that this means that the beliefs and norms of a negotiator, rooted in civic culture, frame the way he perceives a conflict and the other disputant, which in turn shapes his decisions on a course of action and thus his negotiating behavior. One element of this belief system pertains to images of the other disputant's culture, relative to his own. These underlying cultural conditions are, inter alia, reflected in communication styles, high context or low context, at the negotiating table. These differences are only further magnified in an international mediation process setting, once a third party with its own predispositions enters the framework. With this foundational understanding of cross-cultural communication in mind, let us now delve into the concept of cultural match and mismatch.

B.   CULTURAL MATCH AND MISMATCH

In international negotiations, often two parties of different cultural background interact. A prerequisite for understanding the impact of culture on process and outcome is to measure the degree of cultural match or mismatch among them. As we have noted thus far, an actor's culture predisposes his or her political behavior. This culturally shaped guideline for individual and collective behavior is often referred to as a norm. Martha Finnemore defines a norm as "a standard of appropriate behavior for actors with a given identity."[113] Cultural match exists when two actors agree on basic norms of appropriate

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[112] Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics,* Princeton University, Press, (Princeton, NY, 1979), 32.

[113] Marth Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change," *International Organization,* vol. 52, no. 4, International Organization at Fifty: Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics, (Autumn 1998), 891.

behavior. Alternatively, cultural mismatch occurs when the parties have divergent cultural norms. Match and mismatch, of course, have to be understood as poles of a continuum, thus in grades.

Andrew Cortell and James W. Davis have looked at the domestic impact of internationally accepted norms. They argue "when such a cultural match exists, domestic actors are likely to treat the international norm as a given, instinctively recognizing the obligations associated with the norm."[114] Cortell and Davis note that resistance to the norms of "the other," in case of mismatch, may occur because they are perceived as "cultural imperialism or colonialism" and therefore "cause domestic resistance or rejection."[115] Cortell and Davis contend that this is, in fact, the case in parts of Asia. "Certain Asian governments and elites reject calls for policies reflecting Western conceptions of human rights and political pluralism as they feel this runs counter to their notion of 'Asian values'."[116]

C.   COMPONENTS OF CULTURE AND THEIR IMPACT ON NEGOTIATION OUTCOMES

Determining individual and measurable indicators within a culture in order to assess cultural match or mismatch seems like an overwhelming task. There are so many aspects to consider! Luckily several scholars have tackled this subject for us. In the early 1980's, Hofstede conducted extensive surveys of IBM employees. His conclusions reveal that a nation's civic culture encompasses five dimensions: 1) individualism v. collectivism, 2) power and inequality, 3) uncertainty avoidance, 4) masculinity v. femininity, and 5) long term v. short term orientation.[117] These five dimensions are depicted in Figure 2.

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[114] Andrew P. Cortell and James W. Davis, Jr., "Understanding the Domestic Impact of International Norms: A Research Agenda," *International Studies Review*, vol. 2, no. 1, (Spring 2000), 74.

[115] Ibid.

[116] Ibid.

[117] Geert Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values*, Sage Publications, Inc., (Beverly Hills, CA, 1984), 13-38.
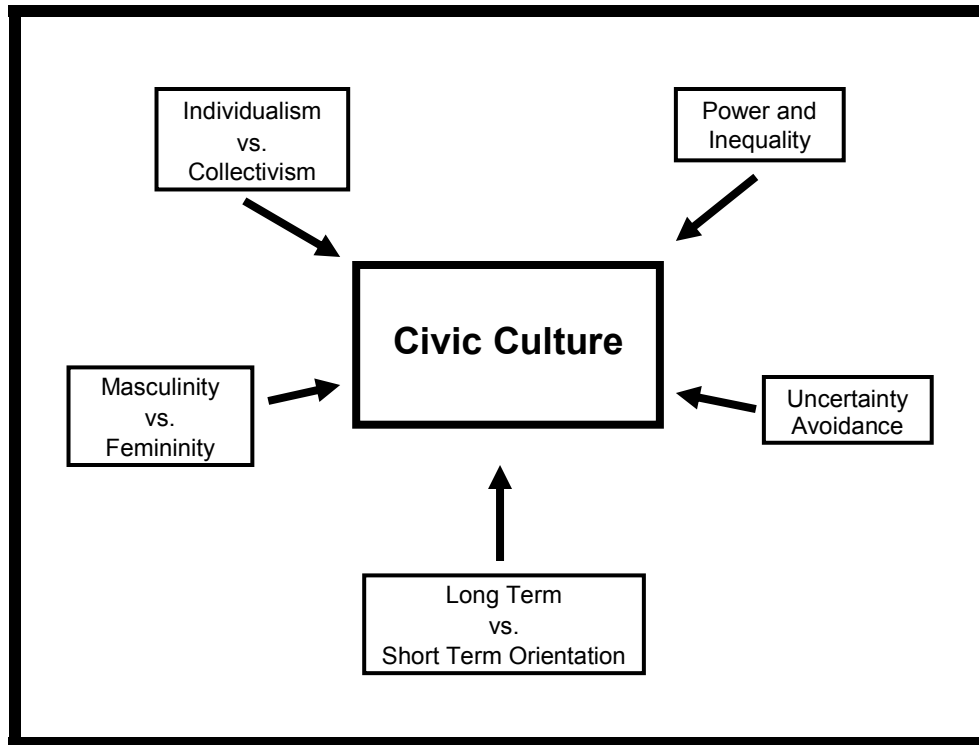
Figure 2.   Hofestede's Components of a Nation's Civic Culture

From their study of international conflict management, Bercovitch and Elgström identified the following five variables as "offering the most promise in assessing cultural uniformity or diversity," which corresponds to our preferred terminology of match and mismatch: 1) geographical proximity, 2) type of political system, 3) level of political rights, 4) level of civil liberties, and 5) religion.[118] Each of these is depicted in Figure 3. Embedded within each of these categories, they were further able to identify "seven distinct geographical regions, nine different political systems, and eighteen types of single or joint religions."[119] They also analyzed and rated both political rights and civil liberties on a sliding scale ranging from "complete freedom" to "no freedom."[120]

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[118] Jacob Bercovitch and Ole Elgström, "Culture and International Mediation: Exploring Theoretical and Empirical Linkages," *International Negotiation,* 2001, vol. 6, 3.

[119] Ibid., 16.

[120] Ibid.
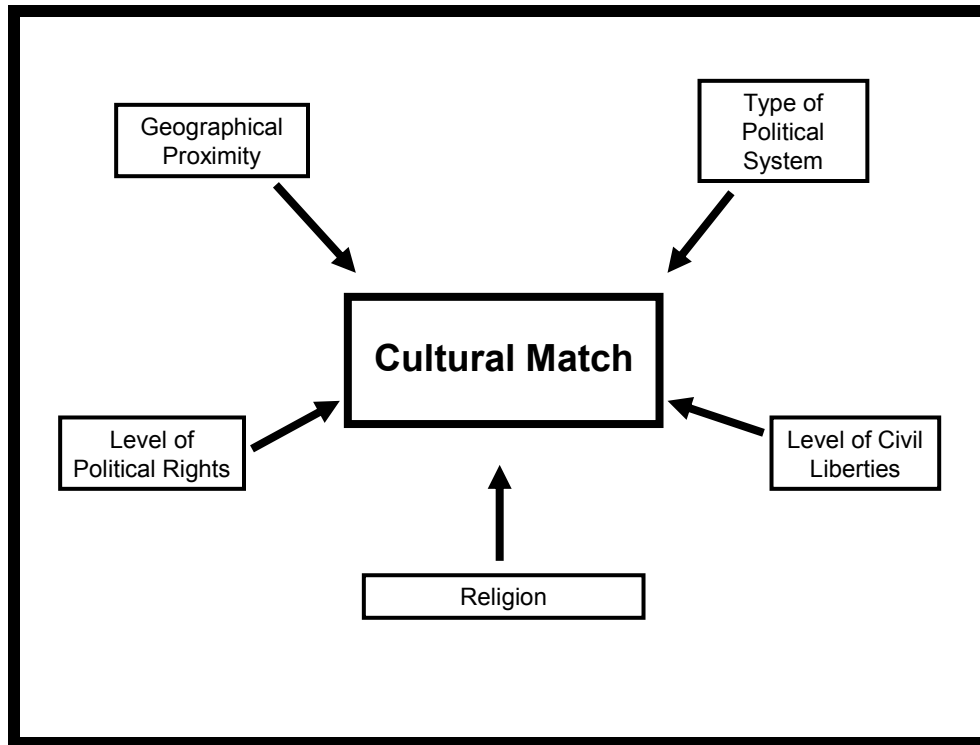
Figure 3.   Berchovitch and Elgström's Components to Assess Cultural Uniformity or Diversity

While the arguments of Berchovitch and Elgström on many of their points are helpful for this thesis, I do synthesize their findings with the other conceptualizations, including insights from cross-cultural communication. Surely, all of the variables Bercovitch, Elgström and Hofstede devised come into play at some point. However, for the sake of parsimony and clarity, I have narrowed the field to the cultural variables that most influence negotiations. Therefore, this thesis does not include Bercovitch and Elgström's variables of level of political rights, level of civil liberties, or religion. The first two are very close and therefore difficult to separate. Confining the analysis to type of political system adequately addresses these dimensions as certain political systems directly lend themselves to corresponding levels of rights and liberties. I do not include religion as many cultures are comprised of morals and values emanating from a plurality of religions represented as subgroups within that society. While one religion may, in fact, be part of the dominant culture, the other variables will adequately depict the same

results. This thesis also does not consider Hofestede's variables of uncertainty avoidance or masculinity vs. femininity. Both of these variables are too ambiguous and difficult to measure for the purposes of our discussion.

Based on these considerations, we can now develop our own indicators of cultural match or mismatch. For the purposes of this thesis, we will rely on the following six variables, formulated as dichotomies, to assess cultural match or mismatch; they build on Hofestede, Berchovitch and Elgström's, but also include insights from cross-cultural communication:

- high context vs. low context,
- individualism vs. collectivism,
- Perceptions of superiority vs. inferiority,
- long term vs. short term orientation,
- geographical proximity vs. distance, and
- democratic vs. authoritarian.

These variables are depicted in Figure 4. It is assumed that each of these perceptions can influence the bargaining range of one or both sides. High context refers to a nonverbal and implicit communication style, while low context refers to a much more verbal and explicit style typical of individualistic societies. Individualist thinking takes the individual as the central reference object, collectivist thinking the collectivity, here the nation or state. Perceptions of superiority versus inferiority refer to each actors' perception of who holds more power in the negotiation scenario and any feelings of inequality that may result from that perception. Long term orientation vs. short term orientation refers to judgments on timing: how long a negotiation process and the implementation of outcomes should take. If a culture believes in "getting right down to the heart of the matter" and negotiators from such a culture are confronted with a culture that holds the belief that "these things take time," negotiations may be quite tense. Geographic proximity refers to the spatial distance between the countries negotiating. Distance itself is no cultural phenomenon, yet it often indicates the amount of cultural affinity and thus the capacity to work with the other. Parties living in one region have experienced intense interaction over time, drawing their cultures close together; parties

living far apart often do not have this kind of exchange and cultural spill-over and thus are more culturally separated. Proximity thus helps assessing the similarity of cultural norms. Finally, democratic vs. authoritarian refers to the type of political system or regime type. The assumption is that similar regime type signals affinity, different regime type distance.

Following Bercovitch and Elgström, I hypothesize that foundational differences, deeply rooted in civic culture, between disputants in any of these areas "reduce the likelihood of a successful mediation outcome; and conversely similarities between countries increase the chances of a successful outcome."[121] I expect that the likelihood of mediation failure increases with the amount of mismatching variables and the intensity of mismatch. However, I do not in this thesis get into the relative weight of these cultural variables, some of which overlap. This is a task posed for further research.
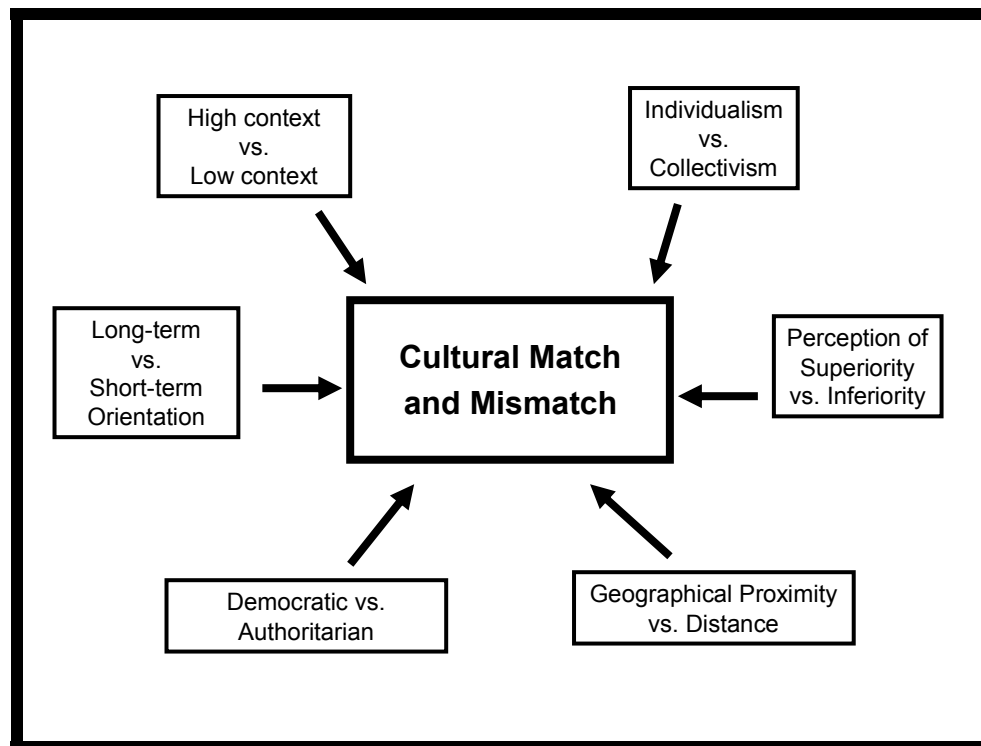

Figure 4.   Components to Assess Cultural Match or Mismatch

[121] Jacob Bercovitch and Ole Elgström, "Culture and International Mediation: Exploring Theoretical and Empirical Linkages," *International Negotiation,* 2001, vol. 6, 16.

D. LINKING CULTURE AND MEDIATION SUCCESS

Bercovitch and Elgström took on the challenge of addressing the concept of cultural match in relation to mediation success. They studied 295 international conflicts, of which 171 were submitted to mediation attempts. Conflicts were mediated ranging from once to several times. To simplify matters, they based "mediation success" on "the behavioral consequences of mediation only."[122] Therefore, they deemed the mediation to be successful "when it had made a considerable difference to the parties observed."[123] Conversely, mediation was determined to be unsuccessful "when it has no effect whatsoever on the parties' level of conflict."[124] Their initial hypothesis was confirmed by careful analysis of the resulting data. They concluded that cultural match or mismatch does in fact influence mediation success or failure. They asserted that "countries, just like individuals, bring their cognitive structures, values and beliefs to conflict management."[125] They noted that these attributes are all rooted in civic culture.[126] Lastly, they hypothesized that "countries with similar cognitive structures and shared values" (i.e., similar civic culture) will address conflict management measures, such as mediation, in a similar fashion.[127] As Berchovitch and Elgström point out, the problem is to define "the components and characteristics" of culture so that we may determine if cultural match or mismatch exists.[128] Based on their findings, Bercovitch and Elgström devised the model shown in Figure 5.

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[122] Jacob Bercovitch and Ole Elgström, "Culture and International Mediation: Exploring Theoretical and Empirical Linkages," *International Negotiation,* 2001, vol. 6, 14.

[123] Ibid.

[124] Ibid., 15.

[125] Ibid.

[126] Ibid.

[127] Ibid.

[128] Ibid.

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CROSS-NATIONAL
CULTURAL
INDICATORS OF
THE PARTIES                    MEDIATION
                               SUCCESS

Parties' Geographical
Proximity to the dispute
-- convergent cultural traits,
perceptions and fears

Same Type of Political
System
- constitutional dimensions
                                    MEDIATION
Social dimensions of rights and     SUCCESS
freedoms and diversity of society    a. Cease-fire
                                     b. Settlement
                                   c. Abatement of the
Same Level of Political                 conflict
Rights and Freedoms

Same Level of Civil
Liberties and Freedoms

Same Type of Dominant
Religion
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Figure 5.   A Model of Cultural Similarity and Mediation Success[129]

If we now take Bercovitch's and Elgström's lead and apply our own concept of the components to assess cultural match or mismatch that we have devised, we can create our own model indicating how cultural match or mismatch might lead us to deduce the probability of successful mediation attempts. I acknowledge that this method presupposes that each of these variables is of equal relevance. In reality there are too many other variables beyond culture that also figure in (see Bercovitch's contingency model). Isolating the culture variable is a task which necessitates a far more complex research design. Mediator profile, international system, and nature of conflict are but a few of the numerous other variables that are at work. However, it is my contention that cultural

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[129] Jacob Bercovitch and Ole Elgström, "Culture and International Mediation: Exploring Theoretical and Empirical Linkages," *International Negotiation,* 2001, vol. 6, 18.

mismatch is one major cause for mediation failure which can be observed 'at work', even if causality cannot be stringently established. Cultural match thus increases the relative likelihood of success in mediation, without of course guaranteeing it. Figure 6 is a diagram that plugs in these variables. Based on the number of matches the two cultures have in common, we can then deduce the likelihood of successful mediation attempts.
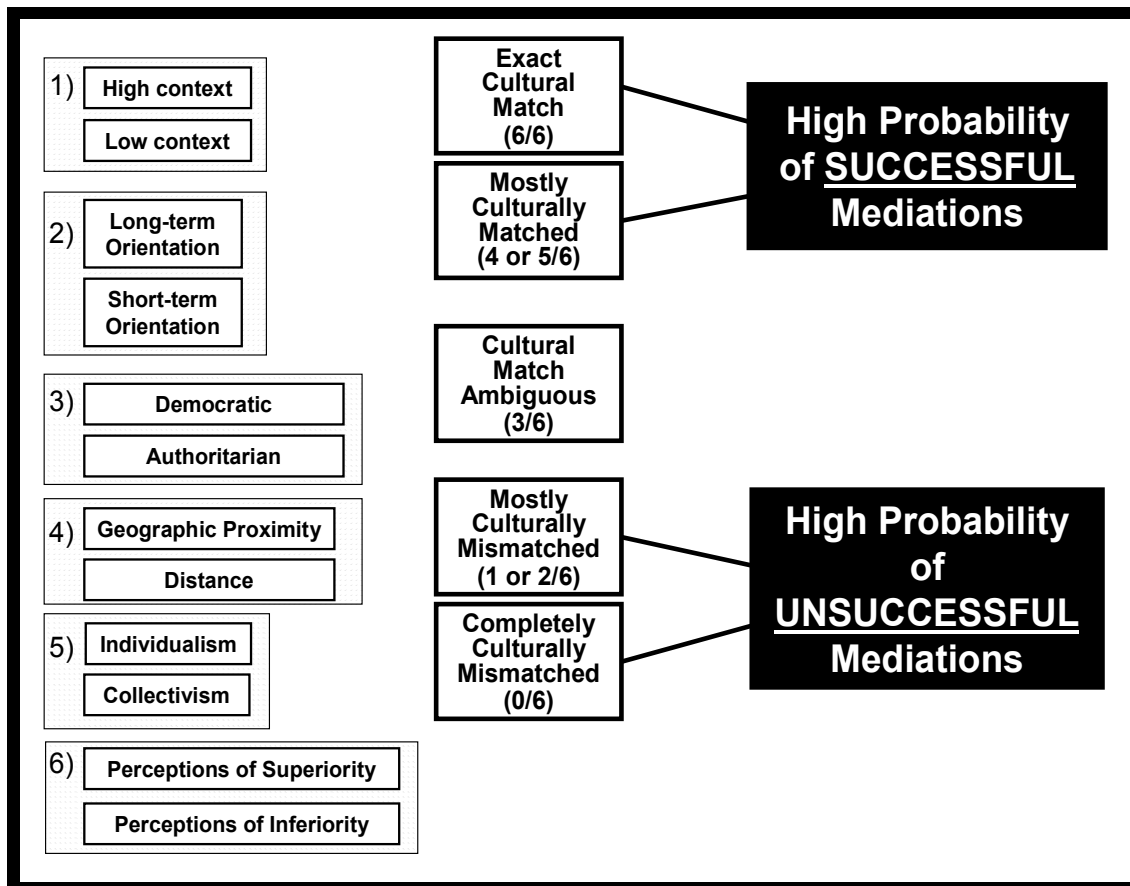
Figure 6.   The Probability of Successful Mediation Based on Cultural Match or Mismatch

Evidence from the literature we have already discussed strongly supports our newly formed graphic. Bercovitch and Elgström's research also confirmed "a very strong relationship between cultural differences and mediation outcomes."[130] In fact, they briefly surmise their research by saying that "cultural differences between parties lead to fewer successful cases of conflict management."[131]

Based on the above information, diagrams, and conclusions, I contend that this concept of cultural match and mismatch can in fact be transferred to international negotiations among parties harboring specific cultures of varying overlap. The existence, or non-existence, of cultural match influences the likelihood of a successful outcome of negotiations. Let us now take this concept of cultural match and mismatch and apply it in two case studies.

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[130] Jacob Bercovitch and Ole Elgström, "Culture and International Mediation: Exploring Theoretical and Empirical Linkages," *International Negotiation,* 2001, vol. 6, 19.

[131] Ibid.

V.   U.S./PRC CULTURAL MATCH OR MISMATCH?

When attempting to assess a nation's negotiation behavior, one must often make generalizations of that culture, trying to condense ideal types which still allow for significant variance among actors. Negotiators both reflect the civic culture they are socialized in but also are individuals with their own tastes, character, style etc. They are not a complete reflection of 'their' culture. Yet, in the following paragraphs we will discuss and analyze negotiation behavior derived from various cultures. Although individual actors might diverge from this pattern and although individual overlap might be stronger than an ideal type delineation might make us assume, for the purposes of examining and comparing negotiating styles the best way is to compare and contrast these ideal types first.

A.   CHINESE CULTURE IN NEGOTIATIONS

Much of the literature on Chinese negotiation style notes that in general, the Chinese have much trepidation when entering into negotiations of any kind, especially those concerning relations with the United States. They view negotiations with the U.S. as "one form of struggle against imperialism."[132] With this in mind, it is easy to understand why the Chinese take formal negotiations so seriously.

Lucian Pye notes, "The Chinese are skilled at using their role as hosts to control the timing of meetings, the arrangement of agendas, and the general pacing of negotiations."[133] American counterparts might get frustrated with the seemingly relaxed and organized nature of the agenda. However, Pye carefully states that to the Chinese, "displaying impatience is a major sin, and they are masters of the art of stalling while keeping alive the other party's hopes."[134] Furthermore, despite the fact that American

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[132] Alfred D. Wilhelm, Jr., *The Chinese at the Negotiating Table,* National Defense University Press, (Washington, D.C., 1994), 11.

[133] Lucien Pye, *Chinese Negotiating Style: Commercial Approaches and Cultural Principles,* Quorum Books, (New York, NY, 1992), xiv-xv.

[134] Ibid.

negotiators must jump through extensive "hoops" such as arranging for visas and setting up formal liaisons in order to even meet with their Chinese counterparts, the Chinese view negotiations as a "favor seeking" venture by the foreign negotiator.[135] Pye also notes that the Chinese attach great importance to accuracy, and will often ignore the tone of a meeting and "single-mindedly press for clarification, often in a persistent if not rude fashion"[136] If these factors weren't already frustrating enough for visiting foreign negotiators, "Chinese negotiating teams tend to be large, but lines of authority can be diffuse and vague."[137] Those sitting at the table are often not always the final decision makers and therefore may promise more than what their superiors would be willing to accept. Let us now look at the Chinese perception of negotiations and how that might influence Sino-American negotiations.

Alfred Wilhelm writes that when utilizing negotiations as a tactic, the Chinese rarely make concessions at the expense of sacrificing principles they deem "essential to the accomplishment of long-term or strategic objectives."[138] He further notes that Chinese tend to view negotiations more as a means of "reducing opposition to their viewpoint" rather than a means to come to a resolution of a dispute.[139] This tactic of not making concessions and viewing the objective of negotiations as bringing "the other" to understand their viewpoint plays into their overall Sino-American relations strategy. This has profound impact on the Chinese interactions with major world powers as China seeks to gain more influence and power in the region and on the world stage. We will later assess the ramifications of these attitudes and mannerisms when we assess the likelihood

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[135] Lucien Pye, *Chinese Negotiating Style: Commercial Approaches and Cultural Principles,* Quorum Books, (New York, NY, 1992), xiv-xv.

[136] Lucien Pye, *Chinese Commercial Negotiating Style,* Oelgeschlager, Bunn and Main, (Cambridge, MA, 1982), 79.

[137] Lucien Pye, *Chinese Negotiating Style: Commercial Approaches and Cultural Principles,* Quorum Books, (New York, NY, 1992), xiv-xv.

[138] Alfred D. Wilhelm, Jr., *The Chinese at the Negotiating Table,* National Defense University Press (Washington, D.C., 1994), 11.

[139] Ibid.

of successful negotiations between the U.S. and China based on their cultural match or mismatch. However, to make this assessment, we must first understand and assess American culture.

B.   AMERICAN CULTURE IN NEGOTIATIONS

American culture has a notorious reputation when it comes to negotiations. A Special Report from the U.S. Institute of Peace found that "U.S. negotiators have a distinctive style: forceful, explicit, legalistic, urgent, and results-oriented."[140] Furthermore, they note that "while American diplomats tend to see themselves as tough but fair bargainers, most foreign practitioners regard the United States as a hegemonic power that is less concerned to negotiate than it is to persuade, sermonize, or browbeat negotiating counterparts into acceding to American positions.[141] While Americans are often perceived to be aggressive at the negotiating table, Graham's research reveals that other cultures also use aggressive persuasive tactics. However, he found that "Americans appear to being using aggressive persuasive tactics earlier."[142] The perception that Americans are unwilling to compromise was found to be false as well. Graham found that Americans "tended to make larger initial concessions" and "were more apt to offer a "fair" price, one that was closer to the eventual solution."[143] The perception of being unwilling to compromise is therefore motivated by the decreased bargaining range available to American negotiators based on their initial proximity to "fair price." The old adage "time is money" is most definitely an American perspective. Adler and Graham note that Americans expect negotiations to take place in a timely fashion, with few delays, and shorter decision making time than their Asian counterparts.[144] With reference to American negotiators perception of time, the U.S. Institute of Peace notes, that

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[140] United States Institute of Peace, *U.S. Negotiating Behavior*, United States Institute of Peace, (Washington, D.C., 2002), 1.

[141] Ibid.

[142] John L. Graham, "The Influence of Culture on the Process of Business Negotiations: An Exploratory Study," *Journal of International Business Studies*, vol. 16, no. 1, (Spring 1985), 89.

[143] Ibid., 92.

[144] Nancy J. Adler and John L. Graham, "Cross-Cultural Interaction: The International Comparison Fallacy?," *Journal of International Business Studies*, vol. 20, no. 3, (Autumn 1989), 524.

American negotiators "enter a negotiation with their own timeframe and usually press for an early agreement, especially if the issue at stake has political significance at home."[145] Lastly, the U.S. Institute of Peace notes that American negotiators "tend to be blunt and legalistic while employing a conceptual vocabulary drawn from such diverse fields as labor relations, Christian theology, and sports." Lastly, they note that American negotiators "are uncomfortable with silence and ignore body language."

C.   CHINESE/AMERICAN CULTURE COMPARISON – MATCH OR MISMATCH?

In the previous chapter, we defined our indicators for identifying the amount of cultural match or mismatch among negotiation partners. Figure 7 gives us a visual comparison of the Chinese and American cultures based on these variables.

Chinese/American Culture Comparison
Match or Mismatch?

	Chinese	American
High or Low Context	High	Low
Individualist or Collectivist	Collectivist	Individualist
Perception of Superiority or Inferiority	Perception of Inferiority	Perception of Superiority
Long or Short Term Orientation	Long	Short
Geographical Proximity or Distance	Far	Far
Type of Political System	Authoritarian	Democratic

Figure 7.   Chinese/American Culture Comparison – Match or Mismatch?

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[145] United States Institute of Peace, *U.S. Negotiating Behavior*, United States Institute of Peace, (Washington, D.C., 2002), 1.

Some of these indicators, such as type of political system, geographical proximity or distance, and individualist or collectivist, are self-explanatory. The other indicators require some further explanation. The first indicator requiring additional explanation is high or low context. In the previous chapter, we explained that high context refers to a nonverbal and implicit communication style, while low context refers to a much more verbal and explicit style typical of individualistic societies. According to Graham, China is a high context nation and the U.S. is a low context nation.[146] He assumes that the fundamental differences in communication methods based on "cultural differences in bargaining processes… are potential sources for friction and misunderstandings between bargainers."[147] In their conclusions drawn from a study of Chinese/American business negotiations, Adler, Brahm and Graham commented that these communication differences "were related to *how* things were said as well as to *what* was said."[148] They go on to explain that these strong contrasts in conversational form and content "are generally not consciously perceived by negotiators. Such 'hidden' problems often lead to cross-cultural disharmony, prejudices, and *feelings* of ill will."[149] Pye's descriptions of Chinese and American respectively high and low context attitudes and mannerisms, deeply rooted in civic culture, toward the negotiating process itself show us that these two cultures experience cultural mismatch.[150]

Perceptions of inferiority and superiority refer to each actor's perception of who holds more power in the negotiation scenario and any feelings of inequality that may result from that perception. The U.S. Institute of Peace writes:

> Chief among the structural influences is the United States' position as a preeminent international power. The enormous breadth of U.S. global interests and the depth of U.S. power, coupled with the increasing linkages

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[146] John L. Graham, "The Influence of Culture on the Process of Business Negotiations: An Exploratory Study," *Journal of International Business Studies*, vol. 16, no. 1, (Spring 1985), 90.

[147] Ibid.

[148] Nancy J. Adler, Richard Brahm and John L. Graham, "Strategy Implementation: A Comparison of Face-to-Face Negotiations in the People's Republic of China and the United States," *Strategic Management Journal*, vol. 13, no. 6, (September 1992), 463.

[149] Ibid.

[150] Lucien Pye, *Chinese Negotiating Style: Commercial Approaches and Cultural Principles,* Quorum Books, (New York, NY, 1992), xiv-xv.

between security, economic, environmental, and other concerns, mean that the United States plays a leading— indeed, often overwhelming—role in numerous negotiating forums.[151]

From this excerpt, it is easy to understand how a negotiator might experience feelings of inferiority sitting across from American officials at the negotiating table.

Regarding short-term versus long-term orientation, Adler and Graham point out that from the American point of view, "negotiations with Chinese and Japanese are exasperatingly long."[152] Conversely, the U.S. Institute of Peace notes that Americans are "businesslike concerned (?) to achieve results in the shortest time." Adler and Graham also contend that "different expectations about 'appropriate' duration" of negotiations may also influence behavior of negotiators from different cultures.[153] As such, this concept of "appropriate duration of negotiations" definitely comes into play during Sino-American negotiations.

Since China is a communist country and the United States is a liberal democracy, we can easily conclude that these two nations have strongly divergent political systems. Furthermore, the mere definitions of these two types of political systems directly point to a collective communist and an individualistic culture associated with a democratic Western society. Bercovitch and Elgström found that when conflicts occurred "within the same geographical region, and thus presumably between states with some convergent perceptions, hopes and fears, the success rate for mediation is 40 percent."[154] However, when the disputes involved "countries belonging to different geographical regions, mediation's success rate is only 24 percent."[155] If we apply these indicators in order to

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[151] United States Institute of Peace, *U.S. Negotiating Behavior*, United States Institute of Peace, (Washington, D.C., 2002), 1.

[152] Nancy J. Adler, Richard Braham and John L. Graham, "Strategy Implementation: A Comparison of Face-to-Face Negotiations in the People's Republic of China and the United States," *Strategic Management Journal*, vol. 13, no. 6, (September 1992), 463.

[153] Ibid.

[154] Jacob Bercovitch and Ole Elgström, "Culture and International Mediation: Exploring Theoretical and Empirical Linkages," *International Negotiation,* 2001, vol. 6, 15-18.

[155] Ibid.

compare the U.S. and China, we can see that opposing political systems, opposing perspectives (individualist vs. collectivist), and distant geographic regions all spell cultural mismatch for Sino-American negotiation attempts.

If we now take this information and run it through our model, we can see that cultural mismatch predominates between the U.S. and the PRC. Figure 8 shows us just how extensive that mismatch is. Based on our finding, we can now expect that mediation attempts between these two cultures have a high probability of being unsuccessful.
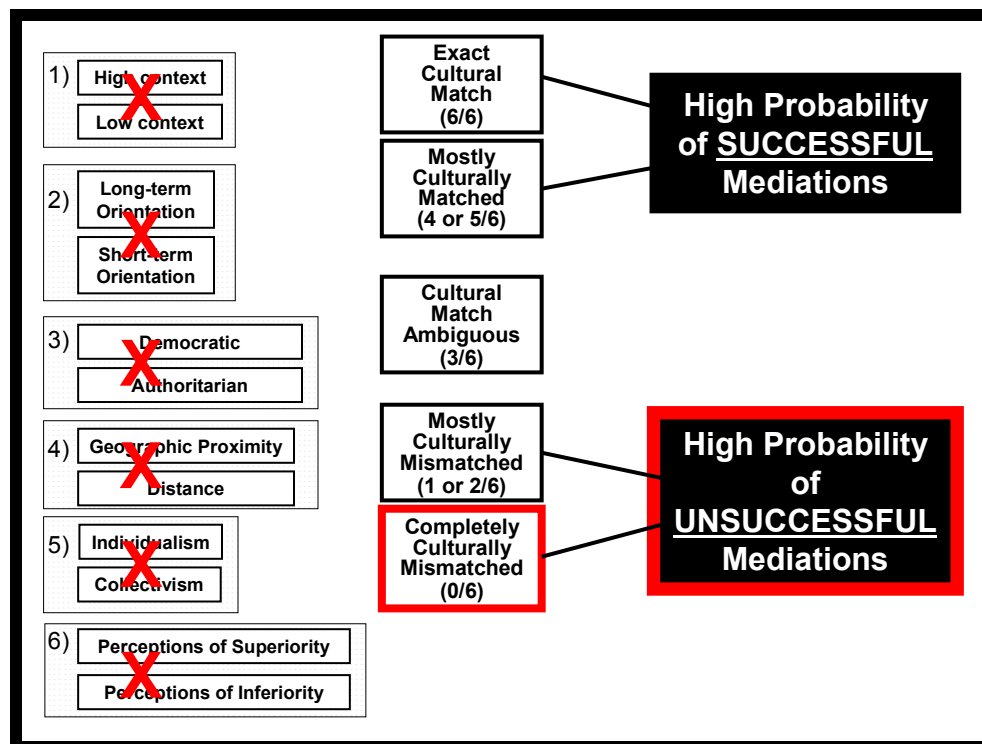
Figure 8.   The Probability of Successful Mediation Between the U.S. and China Based on Cultural Match or Mismatch

How does this mismatch play out in real negotiations? With our determination that these two cultures are extensively mismatched in hand, we can now turn our attention toward the two specific episodes in Sino-American negotiations and apply the theory we developed. Let us begin by examining the 1999 bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade.

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VI. THE IMPACT OF CULTURAL MISMATCH ON NEGOTIATING BEHAVIOR AND OUTCOME: A CLOSE LOOK AT TWO NEGOTIATION EPISODES

We have now established that strong cultural mismatch exists between the U.S. and China. Based on that assessment, we also know that successful mediation attempts between these two governments are highly unlikely. Negotiations of these types of episodes take place "behind closed doors." Exact details of the interactions at the negotiation table itself are often unavailable as "meeting minutes" are not published from these types of interactions. However, from the public rhetoric prior, during, and after negotiations likes these, we can infer the stance of both sides. Let us now examine two episodes of interaction between the two countries to test our hypothesis.

A.   1999 BOMBING OF THE CHINESE EMBASSY IN BELGRADE - BACKGROUND

On 8 May 1999, believing it was a headquarters building for Milosevic's forces, a U.S. B2 bomber aircraft dropped a bomb on the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, as part of the NATO-conducted air campaign on Kosovo.[156] NATO personnel responsible for target selection blamed outdated maps and databases for the "unfortunate mix-up."[157] Three Chinese citizens in the building that night died and numerous others were injured.[158]

1.   Chinese Perspective

Understandably, the Chinese government immediately expressed outrage at the event calling it a "barbaric attack and a gross violation of Chinese sovereignty."[159] Many

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[156] U.S. Department of Defense, "Background Briefing-Chinese Embassy Strike," 10 May 1999, http://www.defenselink.mil/news/May1999/x05101999_x05101.html (accessed 13 March 2008).

[157] Ibid.

[158] BBC News Online, "World: Europe; NATO Hits Chinese Embassy," 8 May 1999, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/338424.stm (accessed 13 March 2008).

[159] Ibid.

Chinese citizens, as well as government officials refused to believe that the bombing was accidental.[160] When NATO war planners admitted to mistakenly using outdated maps and intelligence databases to select targets for the air raid, Chinese officials were very vocal about their skepticism. Although the air raid was a NATO sanctioned military action, China singled out the U.S. as the culprits as it was an American war plane that actually dropped the ammunition. This, in turn, set off a rash of anti-American protests, some of which caused extensive damage to the American embassy in China. In their analysis of the incident, Lampton and Ewing note Beijing's three demands of Washington following the bombing; "(1) make an open and official apology to Beijing, the Chinese people, and the relatives of the Chinese victims; (2) carry out a complete and thorough investigation of the attack on China's embassy in Yugoslavia; and (3) promptly publicize the detailed results of the investigation and punish those responsible for the attack."[161] Gries explains that from the Chinese perspective, "this was just another example of America's 'compulsive lying' about the bombing" and that it is somehow "part of a larger plan" with a goal to "humiliate the Chinese."[162]

2.   U.S. Perspective

President Clinton and the U.S. government apologized for the tragic incident and agreed to pay compensation for the destruction of the Chinese embassy and to the victims' families.[163] Many American citizens and government officials believed that the anti-American protests were actually state sponsored.[164] Peter Gries explained that many reports in the American media assessed that "the Chinese people were not genuinely angry with (innocent) America; they were, rather, manipulated by Communist

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[160] Peter H. Gries, "Tears of Rage: Chinese Nationalist Reactions to the Belgrade Embassy Bombing," *The China Journal*, no. 46, (July 2001), 25.

[161] David M. " and Richard D. Ewing, U.S.-China Relations in a Post-September 11th World," *The Nixon Center* (Washington, D.C., 2002), 13.

[162] Peter H. Gries, "Tears of Rage: Chinese Nationalist Reactions to the Belgrade Embassy Bombing," *The China Journal*, no. 46, (July 2001), 33.

[163] David M. " and Richard D. Ewing, U.S.-China Relations in a Post-September 11th World," *The Nixon Center* (Washington, D.C., 2002), 13.

[164] Peter H. Gries, "Tears of Rage: Chinese Nationalist Reactions to the Belgrade Embassy Bombing," *The China Journal*, no. 46, (July 2001), 34.

propaganda that the bombing was intentional." He continued by saying that the American public also seemed to feel that the Chinese government "failed to tell its citizens that the U.S. attack was an accident and that President Clinton has apologized to Beijing." This was evident during a question and answer session following a press conference with then Secretary of State, Madeline Albright. She responded to questions regarding Chinese government support for anti-American protests as a result of the bombing by saying "In terms of the support, the Vice President of China made a statement in which he in fact said that the demonstrations could be carried on within legal means. That is definitely an indication of their support for what is going on."[165] From the American perspective, Gries writes, "the protests were yet another example of the 'Communist menace'."[166]

3.   Negotiation Attempts and Outcomes

Negotiations began on May 10 when Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan sent a note to the U.S. Ambassador which included their four-point list of demands we mentioned earlier: "a public and formal apology, a thorough and complete investigation, a rapid disclosure of investigation results, and severe punishment of the perpetrators."[167] Additionally, the Chinese "requested that the United Nations (UN) Security Council convene an emergency meeting on the violence" which resulted in the Security Council chairman issuing a statement urging "a comprehensive and thorough investigation of the bombing."[168] This was followed by a 14 May telephone call between President Bill Clinton and President Jiang Zemin where President Clinton apologized and pledged to investigate the event and disclose the results.[169] President Clinton sent a special envoy, Under Secretary of State Thomas R. Pickering to China on 16 June to report the

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[165] United States State Department, "Press Remarks on the "Ethnic Cleansing in Kosovo Report," Washington, D.C., 10 May 1999, http://secretary.state.gov/www/statements/1999/990510.html (accessed 13 March 2008).

[166] Peter H. Gries, "Tears of Rage: Chinese Nationalist Reactions to the Belgrade Embassy Bombing," *The China Journal*, no. 46, (July 2001), 25.

[167] Wu Baiyi, "Chinese Crisis Management during the 1999 Embassy Bombing Incident," *Managing Sino-American Crises: Case Studies and Analysis,* Michael D. Swaine, Tousheng Zhang, Danielle F. S. Cohen eds., Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, (Washington, D.C., 2006), 353.

[168] Ibid., 354.

[169] Ibid.

investigation results to the Chinese government. The Under Secretary expressed the U.S.' "regret" and reiterated that the bombing occurred due to grave mistakes by various U.S. government agencies. The Chinese denounced this reasoning as being "entirely unconvincing and thus unacceptable"[170] From 28-30 July, the two nations convened a round of negotiations in Beijing to determine "the compensation for China's human casualties and property losses." This round of discussions proved successful. "In mid-August the U.S. government paid compensation in the amount of $4.5 million to the Chinese government for loss of life."[171] After an additional round of negotiations, on 16 Dec, a Department of State spokesman announced, "We will seek funding in Congress so that we can provide $28 million for damages to the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade. The Chinese have agreed to pay for damage to U.S. facilities in China in the amount of $2.87 million."[172]

Gries explains, that for the Chinese "Indemnities seem important not as monetary compensation, but as a public punishment that symbolically restores China to its proper status."[173] Additionally, he notes that "the anger that Chinese displayed toward America during the bombing protests, similarly, sought to restore national self-esteem or *mianzi* (face)."[174]

4. Did Cultural Mismatch Have An Effect on the Conduct of Negotiations and the Outcome of This Event?

Let us now refer back to our side by side comparison of Chinese and American culture, seen in Figure 9. From this chart we have deduced that cultural mismatch exists.

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[170] Wu Baiyi, "Chinese Crisis Management during the 1999 Embassy Bombing Incident," *Managing Sino-American Crises: Case Studies and Analysis,* Michael D. Swaine, Tousheng Zhang, Danielle F. S. Cohen eds., Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, (Washington, D.C., 2006), 354.

[171] Ibid., 354.

[172] United States Department of State, "China—Property Damage Agreements," 16 December 1999, http://secretary.state.gov/www/briefings/statements/1999/ps991216b.html (accessed 13 March 2008).

[173] Peter H. Gries, "Tears of Rage: Chinese Nationalist Reactions to the Belgrade Embassy Bombing," *The China Journal*, no. 46, (July 2001), 35.

[174] Ibid., 25.

If we apply the details of the 1999, Chinese Embassy bombing in Belgrade to this model it quickly becomes clear that cultural mismatch affected the negotiation behavior and outcome of this event.

Chinese/American Culture Comparison
Match or Mismatch?

	Chinese	American
High or Low Context	High	Low
Individualist or Collectivist	Collectivist	Individualist
Perception of Superiority or Inferiority	Perception of Inferiority	Perception of Superiority
Long or Short Term Orientation	Long	Short
Geographical Proximity or Distance	Distance	Distance
Type of Political System	Authoritarian	Democratic

Figure 9.   Chinese/American Culture Comparison – Match or Mismatch?

We can look to the public statements of each nation to see the stark difference in communication styles. The Chinese government, representing a high context culture, spoke more generally about the incident simply stating that this was an atrocity and that it believed the U.S. was at fault. The U.S., on the other hand, a low context culture, was quick to investigate and report the details of the findings. The administration went into great detail about why it had made the mistake, what it thought the building was, and why it had come to that conclusion.

China's view that this was one of many events perpetrated by the U.S. in an attempt to humiliate it is an excellent example of its long-term orientation. The Chinese had not forgiven or forgotten past events they believed were also designed to humiliate their country. Therefore, this bombing brought back to the surface all the ill-will of those

past events. The U.S., on the other hand, dealt with this event as a single, individual case, of course also trying to play its significance down. For Americans, when an event is resolved, it is laid to rest. Additionally, the Chinese refusal to accept the investigation results as being an accidental mistake shows another example of their long-term orientation. In an effort to quickly resume normal relations between the two nations, the U.S. tried to resolve the matter by agreeing to and accomplishing all of the Chinese terms for negotiation. The Chinese were willing to draw out negotiations in hopes of attaining more favorable investigation results. Ultimately, after several more rounds of negotiations, the Chinese acquiesced on this point in order to normalize relations and "immediately resume and continue a constructive bilateral relationship oriented toward the twenty-first century."[175]

As shown in our diagram, the Chinese and American cultures are situated in opposing political systems. For most Americans, the mysterious perception of "communism" shaped their attitudes of the events surrounding the anti-American demonstrations that took place in China following the bombing. It was assumed that because the nation was communist, these protests must have been government sponsored.

The strongest examples of cultural mismatch in this episode occur in the Chinese perception of superiority vs. inferiority. Specifically, Gries points to indemnities being not only for financial compensation but also to provide "public punishment that symbolically restores China to its proper status."[176] Feeling that they had "lost face" in the eyes of the nations of the world when the U.S. bombed their embassy, the Chinese protests and demands were all designed to readjust the power balance. It is also worth noting that the U.S. and NATO air campaign in Kosovo took place despite stark Chinese opposition to it in the UN Security Council. When the U.S. and NATO chose to act

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[175] Wu Baiyi, "Chinese Crisis Management during the 1999 Embassy Bombing Incident," *Managing Sino-American Crises: Case Studies and Analysis,* Michael D. Swaine, Tousheng Zhang, Danielle F. S. Cohen eds., Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, (Washington, D.C., 2006), 354.

[176] Peter H. Gries, "Tears of Rage: Chinese Nationalist Reactions to the Belgrade Embassy Bombing," *The China Journal*, no. 46, (July 2001), 35.

without the full support of the UN Security Council, they were able to get around the Chinese veto power and thereby belittled the Chinese power status in this pivotal international organization.[177]

B.   EP3 INCIDENT - BACKGROUND

On the morning of April 1, 2001, news broadcasts around the world were buzzing with a juicy bit of news regarding U.S. – China relations.[178] An American EP-3 surveillance aircraft, flying in international airspace off the Chinese coast, had collided with a Chinese fighter.[179] The Chinese aircraft and pilot crashed into the sea while the larger U.S. aircraft, although it sustained some damage, was able to treacherously make its way to a Chinese air force base on Hainan Island. The 24 crewmembers were detained pending an investigation into the incident.[180] Therefore, began 11 days of tense negotiations between American and Chinese officials "over the detention of the crew, responsibility for the collision, and compensation."[181]

If you refer your attention to Figure 10, you will notice that the EP-3's flight plan followed the Chinese coast coming from the Taiwan Strait down toward China's southeastern coast. International waters and airspace begin 12 nautical miles from the coast. Therefore, the collision that occurred approximately 70 nautical miles off China's coast was well into international airspace. It was not until the American aircraft sought a safe place to land that it entered into Chinese airspace.

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[177] Peter H. Gries, "Tears of Rage: Chinese Nationalist Reactions to the Belgrade Embassy Bombing," *The China Journal*, no. 46, (July 2001), 35.

[178] CNN.com, "U.S. accuses China over air collision," 2 April 2008, http://archives.cnn.com/2001/U.S./04/01/us.china.plane.06/) (accessed 13 March 2008).

[179] White House Press Release, "Statement by the President on American Plane and Crew in China," Outside Oval Office, 11:38am EDT, April 2, 2001, http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/04/20010402-2.html (accessed 13 March 2008).

[180] David M. Lampton and Richard D. Ewing, "U.S.-China Relations in a Post-September 11th World," *The Nixon Center* (Washington, D.C., 2002), 10-11.

[181] Ibid.
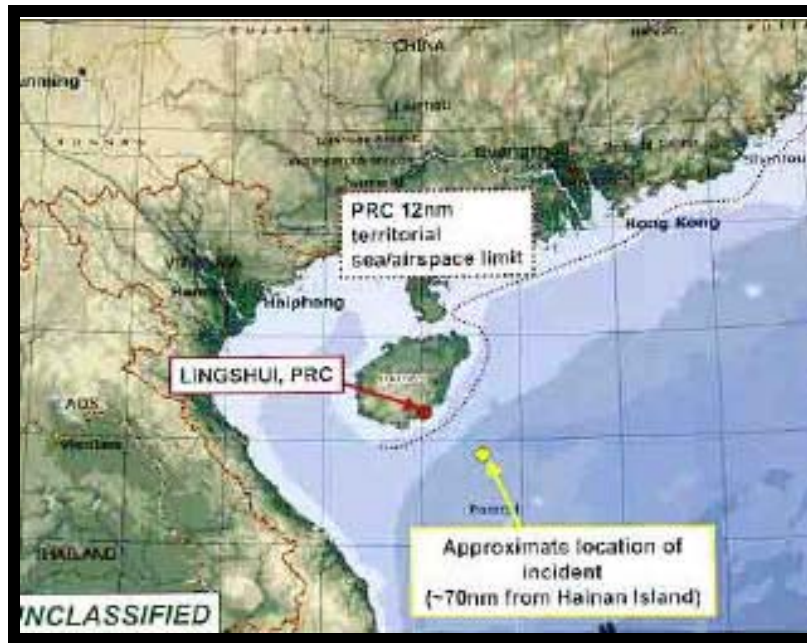
Figure 10.   Graphic Depicting the EP-3 Incident of 1 Apr 2001[182]

1.   The Chinese Perspective

China was outraged by the U.S. reconnaissance flight.[183] It felt that it was unlawful for any nation to "spy" on another nation. Beijing essentially held the detained crew and the surveillance aircraft with all of its potential intelligence as ransom for an apology.[184] Chinese officials claimed, "the direct cause to the crash of the Chinese plane is the U.S. plane violated flying regulations by suddenly turning toward the Chinese planes and bumping into one of the planes."[185] Based on this perspective, China demanded that the U.S. not only accept full responsibility for the incident, but also compensation for Chinese damages.

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[182] David M. Lampton and Richard D. Ewing, "U.S.-China Relations in a Post-September 11th World," *The Nixon Center* (Washington, D.C., 2002), 10.

[183] Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States of America, "Chinese Fighter Bumped by U.S. Military Surveillance Plane," April 1, 2001, http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/zmgx/zmgx/Military%20Relationship/t35745.htm (accessed 13 March 2008).

[184] David M. Lampton and Richard D. Ewing, "U.S.-China Relations in a Post-September 11th World," *The Nixon Center* (Washington, D.C., 2002), 10-11.

[185] CNN.com, "U.S. accuses China over air collision," 2 April 2008, http://archives.cnn.com/2001/U.S./04/01/us.china.plane.06/) (accessed 13 March 2008).

2.   The American Perspective

The Americans maintained that they were well within their legal rights as they were flying in international airspace. President Bush called for the "prompt and safe return of the crew, and the return of the aircraft without further damaging or tampering."[186] Furthermore, Admiral Blair of the U.S. Pacific Command made public statements suggesting that although this was an unfortunate accident, the incident reflected a "pattern of increasingly unsafe behavior" by the Chinese military aircraft.[187] He went on to explain that "intercepts by Chinese fighters over the past couple months had become more aggressive to the point that we felt they were endangering the safety of the Chinese and American aircraft."[188] In response to the Chinese accusations that the large surveillance aircraft turned into the Chinese fighter, Admiral Blair was quoted as saying "Big airplanes like [an EP-3] fly straight and level on their path, little airplanes zip around them."[189] He went on to say, "Under international air space rules, the faster more maneuverable aircraft has obligation to stay out of the way of the slower aircraft. It's pretty obvious who bumped into who."[190]

3.   Negotiation Attempts and Outcomes

Lampton and Ewing explain the details and intricacies of the negotiation process that followed. They begin by recounting that then Secretary of State Colin Powell was first to make a move in the ensuing chess match of negotiations by saying "We regret that

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[186] White House Press Release, "Statement by the President on American Plane and Crew in China," Outside Oval Office, 11:38am EDT. 2 April 2001, http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/04/20010402-2.html (accessed 13 March 2008).

[187] CNN.com, "U.S. accuses China over air collision," 2 April 2008, http://archives.cnn.com/2001/U.S./04/01/us.china.plane.06/) (accessed 13 March 2008).

[188] Ibid.

[189] Ibid.

[190] Ibid.

the Chinese plane did not get down safely, and we regret the loss of that Chinese pilot."
[191] This was quickly followed with a letter expressing his "regret" over the loss of the Chinese pilot.[192] Lampton and Ewing go on to explain the specifics of the letter.

> Powell's remarks were translated as *yihan,* or regret, and did not satisfy Beijing, which was still looking for a full apology. On April 11 in Beijing, Ambassador Prueher delivered a letter in English (without a copy translated into Chinese and signed by the U.S. ambassador) that stated, 'Both President Bush and Secretary of State Powell have expressed their sincere regret over your missing pilot and aircraft. . . . Please convey to the Chinese people . . . that we are very sorry for their loss. . . . We are very sorry the entering of Chinese airspace and the landing did not have verbal clearance.' Although the word *apology* was not used in the English, the Chinese stretched the English words into an apology in Chinese. The double *very sorry* was translated by the Chinese as *shenbiao qianyi,* which means "a deep expression of apology or regret." However, the U.S. embassy subsequently translated *very sorry* as *feichang wanxi,* which indicates an expression of great sympathy but not an apology. The embassy version also used *feichang baoqian,* or "extremely sorry." For better or worse, the verbal dexterity allowed China to claim a U.S. apology and release the crew to fly home on April 12, while the United States insists it never apologized.[193]

Peter Gries explained that "the political fall-out from the mid-air collision" between the two aircraft "suggests that the 1999 Belgrade bombing was indeed a turning point in Sino-American relations. Chinese America-bashers related the incident to the Belgrade bombing and saw it as evidence that Americans were again killing and humiliating Chinese. American China-bashers, meanwhile, pointed to the Belgrade bombing protests to argue that Chinese tyranny was again resurgent."[194]

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[191] David M. Lampton and Richard D. Ewing, "U.S.-China Relations in a Post-September 11th World," *The Nixon Center* (Washington, D.C., 2002), 10-11.

[192] Ibid.

[193] Ibid.

[194] Peter H. Gries, "Tears of Rage: Chinese Nationalist Reactions to the Belgrade Embassy Bombing," *The China Journal*, no. 46, (July 2001), 26.

While the aircrew returned home safely, the aircraft remained in China. [195] The U.S. and China continued bickering over who would foot the bill for the various damages incurred on both sides. Several months later, the U.S. surveillance aircraft was returned to the United States in pieces.[196] Chinese demands for nearly $1 million were ignored. The U.S. eventually sent a check for $34,567, which it deemed, was "fair value" for any services the Chinese provided.[197]

4.   Did Cultural Mismatch Have An Effect on the Conduct of Negotiations and the Outcome of This Event?

Let us now refer back to our side by side comparison of Chinese and American culture, seen in Figure 11. From this chart we have deduced that cultural mismatch exists. If we apply the details of the 2001 EP-3 Incident to this model, it quickly becomes clear that cultural mismatch affected the negotiation behaviors and outcome of this event.

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[195] Steven L. Myers, "Collision with China: The Pentagon; U.S. Tape Is Said to Show Reckless Flying by Chinese," *The New York Times*, 14 April 2001, http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9C01EFDC1031F937A25757C0A9679C8B63&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=all (accessed 13 March 2008).

[196] David M. Lampton and Richard D. Ewing, "U.S.-China Relations in a Post-September 11th World," *The Nixon Center* (Washington, D.C., 2002), 13.

[197] Steven Mufson, "U.S. Pays China $34567 for Cost of Downed Plane," *Washington Post*, 10 August 2000, A18, 60.

Chinese/American Culture Comparison
Match or Mismatch?

		Chinese	American
High or Low Context		High	Low
Individualist or Collectivist		Collectivist	Individualist
Perception of Superiority or Inferiority		Perception of Inferiority	Perception of Superiority
Long or Short Term Orientation		Long	Short
Geographical Proximity or Distance		Distance	Distance
Type of Political System		Authoritarian	Democratic

Figure 11.   Chinese/American Culture Comparison – Match or Mismatch?

We can look to the public statements of each nation to see the stark difference in communication styles. China, a high context culture, spoke more generally about the incident simply stating that there was an accident and that it believed the U.S. was at fault. The U.S., on the other hand, was quick to disseminate details of the event. Moreover, the Chinese perception of superiority and inferiority definitely came into play. Perceiving that they had "lost face" in the eyes of the nations of the world when the U.S. violated their airspace, they repeatedly insisted that the U.S. accept full responsibility with an apology and extensive compensation. The fact that Secretary Powell's letter was sent only in English only served to further the Chinese perception of American arrogance. Conversely, the U.S., feeling it had "the moral high ground" and international law on its side, demonstrated its sentiment of superiority by not only refusing to issue an official apology, but also completely ignoring Chinese financial estimates of damages and instead choosing to compensate only what it deemed appropriate, a mere fraction of Chinese demands. While U.S. officials were well aware of the "loose" translation of Secretary Powell's letter given to the Chinese people, the U.S. did nothing to correct the

misunderstanding. Lastly, this result of this episode demonstrates the cultural mismatch between the two nations when it comes to long term vs. short term orientation. After only four months, the U.S. had its crew returned safely, its surveillance aircraft returned in pieces, political rhetoric had subsided, and remittances for "damages," albeit a fraction of the amount requested from China, were paid. The U.S. was done dealing with the issue as it was considered resolved. China, on the other hand, continued unsuccessfully to push for additional compensation for several years to come.

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VII. CONCLUSION

Armed with all the new information and revelations presented in this thesis, the scenario we presented at the beginning now takes on new meaning with increased understanding. As one of five representatives from the United States attending negotiations with Chinese businessmen, you are now more culturally prepared for the interactions about to take place. You now realize that even after almost an hour of waiting, it is crucial to remain calm and fight the urge to show frustration by continually checking your watch and sighing aloud. You now understand that when the leader of the Chinese delegation arrives and suggests sharing a meal before beginning negotiations it is an integral part of their understanding of negotiations. Insisting on beginning negotiations right away only reaffirms their stereotypes about American arrogance at the negotiating table.

If the Chinese delegates were also to learn from the information presented in this thesis, perhaps they would try to be more punctual, straightforward, and decisive at the negotiating table. This revised narrative gives examples of how both sides could make small concessions on process, not even substance, in order to be more culturally sensitive to their counterparts, thereby enabling an atmosphere that is conducive to fruitful and trustful negotiations. Demonstration of cultural understanding might ameliorate negotiation attempts and smooth an otherwise stressful and combative process.

Nation-states often enter into negotiations as a, sometimes final attempt to resolve their differences in a diplomatic forum rather than resorting to combative retaliation. These negotiations can be protracted and tenuous, especially when the disputing parties come from different cultures. This thesis has shown that all too often, culture is a neglected aspect of conflict resolution. Cultural mismatch and misunderstanding are additional confounding factors that complicate communication and create misperceptions that sometimes hinder finding a mutually acceptable compromise. When all parties

approach negotiations with a clear understanding of the impact of cross-cultural understanding and communication on the conflict resolution process, the parties might find negotiations are smoother and resolution comes easier.

This thesis has attempted to merge two fields of study that, until now, have been left virtually separate in the academic community and largely understudied: conflict resolution and cross-cultural communication. The overall question that this thesis sought to address is: What is the role of culture in the conflict resolution process, specifically in international negotiations. It is a rather broad question that first of all aims at getting an overview as to the major effects of culture on conflict resolution, which is a prerequisite for further in-depth studies.

The thesis began by laying out the conceptual foundation of both conflict resolution and culture/cross-cultural communication. It mainly concentrated on negotiations in international relations and also touched upon international mediation, as one major activity in the conflict resolution field. This discussion started out with conceptualizing key terms and theories associated with both fields of study. Once this foundational understanding of the two fields was laid and a concept was forwarded on how to identify and measure cultural match or mismatch among negotiation partners, we examined two case studies in U.S.-China relations that served to test the concept.

A.   THEORETICAL CONCLUSIONS

The basic assumption of this thesis was that the significance of culture in conflict resolution is still politically underrated and academically under-explored, with the effect that negotiations fail and opportunities for successful international mediation are missed. In this thesis, we have discovered that just like our cultural Matryoshka doll, civic culture is at the core of a nation's political culture and strategic culture. Analyses of a culture at any of these individual levels without an understanding of its civic culture, just as the individual dolls themselves, would be incomplete. Civic culture is the core. It is from the core of civic culture that the individual political actors derive their customs, manners, and forms of social organization which guide their day to day relations with others. All of their knowledge, beliefs, morals, customs, habits, and adherence to laws play into their

interactions both domestically with other politicians, as well as internationally when representing their nation on the world stage, especially at the negotiating table. It is in this way that culture plays a significant role in the interactions of actors at the negotiation table.

In this thesis, we argued that the impact of culture on negotiation and mediation can be measured by transferring a concept from constructivist norm diffusion research. As they look at the match or mismatch of international and domestic norms, we looked at the cultural match or mismatch of negotiating parties. We then developed our own indicators of cultural match or mismatch, building on Hofestede, Berchovitch and Elgström's research and adding insights from cross-cultural communication. The following six variables, formulated as dichotomies, we identified as most relevant: high context vs. low context, individualism vs. collectivism, perceptions of superiority vs. inferiority, long term vs. short term orientation, geographical proximity vs. distance and democratic vs. authoritarian regimes. We then created our own model indicating how cultural match or mismatch might lead us to deduce the probability of successful mediation attempts. Based on the number and quality of matches the two cultures have in common, we can then deduce the likelihood of successful mediation attempts. The underlying hypothesis is that cultural mismatch is one major cause for mediation failure which can be observed 'at work', even if causality cannot be stringently established. Cultural match thus increases the relative likelihood of success in negotiation, without of course guaranteeing it.

B. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Peter Gries wrote, "Until Chinese and Americans learn to affirm rather than threaten each other's self-concepts, their common interest in a stable Asia Pacific will not be sufficient to ensure peace in the 21st century."[198] This quote underscores the

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[198] Peter H. Gries, "Tears of Rage: Chinese Nationalist Reactions to the Belgrade Embassy Bombing," *The China Journal*, no. 46, (July 2001), 43.

importance of cultural understanding in diplomatic negotiations. As such, in-depth cultural training and language training should be required of any American representative to international negotiations.

Events following September 11th highlighted the personnel and capability gap in both language and cultural understanding. Since that time, the military services have begun to acknowledge and develop new programs to address the need to raise personnel with extensive foreign language and regional political-military understanding. However, the time needed to gain in-depth insight into regional issues, not to mention the complexities of acquiring the foreign language capabilities of this type, is both lengthy and costly. The funding required to mount these programs, which need to be long-term and institutionalized to be effective, is often an obstacle. It would be worthwhile for the military to expand its investments in developing a future force of personnel trained and poised to handle these issues.

If we were to carry these same lessons over, to look toward the American education system, it can also be said that in order to better prepare our youth, and to ensure a future of peace, language and cultural awareness training should also be expanded. This would not only ease some of the cultural tensions many schools systems now face, but also ensure that as adults, they will be better prepared to handle cross-cultural negotiations throughout the rest of their lives.

C.   RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

There are many areas that could be explored in order to further our understanding of the role of culture in conflict resolution. In this thesis, we concluded that the likelihood of negotiation failure increases with the intensity of mismatch. However, we did not get into the relative weight of these mismatching variables, some of which overlap, as well as into causal pathways. Therefore, this would be an excellent prospect for further research.

Another aspect bracketed here was the effect of cultural mismatch in mediation. Once a third party enters a dispute, it brings in its own cultural background, which is often quite distinct from the one of the disputants. Analyzing the impact of culture on a

triadic relationship is challenging, though. It is supposed here that cultural mismatch between mediators and disputants is a serious source of negotiation and mediation failure, too, a hypothesis that would require more complex research designs.

Finally, as demonstrated by our cultural match or mismatch discussion, a comparative analysis of two cultures in negotiations is quite helpful in understanding the dynamics at the negotiation table. It would be useful to continue this type of research in order to compare negotiating styles, behavior and perceptions of the other at the negotiating table. The more we know about the negotiation records, including non-verbal communication, the better cases are suited to measure the impact of cultural match and mismatch on negotiation behavior and outcomes. Comparative studies comparing cases of match and mismatch appear to be particularly rewarding.

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